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MAKING DAISY CHAINS.

# H A P P Y LITTLE CHILDREN:

Their Sayings and Doings.

BY

A. S. L.

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WITH SEVENTEEN ENGRAVINGS.

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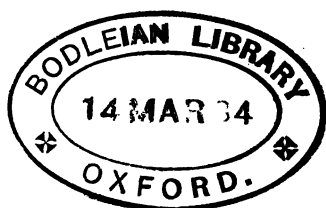
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# HAPPY LITTLE CHILDREN.


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## CHAPTER I.

### THE LITTLE BROWN MOUSE.

"The little dormouse is tawny red;  
He makes against winter a nice snug bed,  
And when all about him it freezes and snows,  
What is it to him, for he naught of it knows?"

MARY HOWITT.



HERE was a little girl, and her name was Fanny. She had a brother called Johnnie. Johnnie was two years older than Fanny. They were very happy little children. They could run and jump and play. They had a father and a mother who loved them dearly, and who taught them to be obedient and to love each other. And besides, they had an Aunt Mary, of whom they were very fond, for she was always merry and kind.

Every morning after breakfast these little chil-

dren brought their books and slates, and said their lessons to their mamma.

One morning, when they brought in their books as usual, they found their mother busy reading a letter. She did not at first notice their entrance, but when she did, she said with a smile, "My dears, you need not do any lessons this morning. I have good news for you. This letter is from your dear Aunt Mary. She is coming to us this morning to stay for a week; and I must now go and see that her room is prepared for her."

And Fanny at once said, "O mamma! how very glad I am. Can I do anything to help you?"

And her mamma replied, "Yes, Fanny, come with me, and put the pins into her pin-cushion, and place the towels on her towel-stand."

"And what can I do, mamma?" said Johnnie.

"Well, Johnnie, you can run to the garden," said his mother, "and cut some flowers to put into the tumbler in her room. You will find the flower-scissors and basket on the hall table."

So Johnnie ran away to cut some flowers for his dear Aunt Mary; and he was very glad to find one pretty rose-bud in his own garden, as well as some forget-me-nots and daisies.

And when the flowers were arranged, and the

room was quite ready, you may be sure that both Johnnie and Fanny watched at the front door till the carriage drove up with Aunt Mary in it.

As soon as they had hugged her and kissed her, they asked if they might help to take her shawls and bags to her own room.

Aunt Mary said, "Yes ; but take great care of this parcel, dear Johnnie. You had better take it into the dining-room."

Johnnie took the parcel Aunt Mary showed to him into the dining-room, but he thought it a very strange parcel. It was neatly and firmly tied up in brown paper ; but this paper was full of little holes, and he said, "Aunt Mary, why is this paper full of little holes ?"

She smiled, and said, "We had better see what is inside the parcel.

"Here is my knife," said Johnnie, "to cut the string."

"Oh no, Johnnie," said his aunt ; "never cut string if you can possibly help it. See, I have unpicked the knot ; and here is a good piece of twine, which will be of use to you when you spin your top. And now let us undo the paper parcel."

Then Aunt Mary opened out the parcel, and inside were two little cages, somewhat like the cages

used for canaries, but very much smaller. They were made of wood and wire, and were divided into two parts: one part, like a bird's cage, was made chiefly of wire, and the children could see what was inside it; but the other part was made entirely of wood, and it was only by opening a little door at the side that they could look into it. And when they opened this door, in each little cage they saw a soft warm nest made of moss and hair, and in the nest was a tiny little brown mouse.

"O Aunt Mary," said Fanny, "what a lovely little mouse! Are these mice for Johnnie and me? Have you brought them for us?"

"Yes, my dear little Fanny," replied her aunt; "and I hope you will take great care of them. They are not common mice; they are called dormice. You will notice that they have little bushy tails like squirrels', that they have white stomachs, and are of a much prettier, brighter brown colour than the common mouse. In this warm summer weather they will run about a great deal; but they do not like the cold, and in winter you will find that they will roll themselves up in their little nests, and will sleep a great deal. And you must then take care to keep them very warm."

"Do they always sleep in the cold weather?"

said Johnnie ; “ or do they come from some warm country, where they need not be afraid of the cold or need to sleep ? ”

“ They are to be found in warm countries, but they are also natives of England. They sleep all the winter long—or hibernate, as it is called—in little nests, which, like birds, they make for themselves in hedges or amongst the small branches and twigs of the hazel-nut or hawthorn tree. They do not, like other mice, make a hole in the ground.”

“ But do not the snow and the rain fall upon the nest and kill them in winter ? ”

“ Ah ! but the nest of the dormouse is not open like the sparrow’s. It is generally made of the blades of grass, which are twisted round and round the twigs until they form a long hollow nest. And then the little dormouse lines it with hair and leaves and moss, to make it warm and keep out the rain and the wind. And the blades of grass and the leaves and hair are all so twisted together that it is scarcely possible to see the opening. And here the dormouse sleeps all winter ; but he keeps his nuts and winter provisions in some hole near his nest.”

“ But what is the use of provisions if he sleeps all the winter ? ”



"The dormouse wakens up in March or April, and as there are then no nuts or seeds of any kind, it would starve if it had not laid up a store for itself in autumn."

"And what food shall we give them, Aunt Mary?" said Fanny.

"Your mamma will give you some of her canary and hemp seed, and nurse will give you a little of baby's bread and milk; but do not give that to them very often."

"And where do you think we had better keep them, mamma?" said Johnnie.

"I think," said his mother, "that you had better keep them in the nursery, if nurse will allow you."

"But before you take them away," said his aunt, "I must tell you that one of the dormice is not so pretty as the other. It has met with an accident, and has lost half of its tail. I tried to get two alike, but could not. Now which of you is to have it?"

The children stood silent for a few seconds, and then Johnnie said, "I will take it, Aunt Mary. I have got my lop-eared rabbit that papa gave me, and Fanny has nothing, so it is fair that I should take it."

"That is a good boy," said his aunt; and Fanny

ran and put her arms round his neck and hugged him, and his mother kissed him.

And then, thanking their aunt for her kind present, the children took their cages into the nursery; and nurse thought the little mice very pretty, and said they might stay there if the children would attend to them, and be very careful to clean them every morning.

Johnnie and Fanny were very careful about them, and never forgot to clean their cages in the morning. Their mamma gave them each a little china saucer, and into this every day they put a little seed, or a little bread and milk, and then they watched their little pets eating their breakfast.

One morning little Fanny cleaned out her mouse's cage as usual, and washed the china saucer, and filled it with seed. Then she watched for the little mouse to come out of his nest in the little dark part of his cage, where he always slept all night. But no mouse came, and she waited and waited, and at last she opened the door of the cage where the nest was and peeped into it, but no mouse was there. And she ran to her nurse and said,—

“O nurse! my little brown mouse is not in its cage. Have you seen it?”

"No, Miss Fanny," said the nurse, "I have not seen it; but I hope you are mistaken. Let me see the cage; perhaps it is hidden under the moss."

And she took up the cage and examined it carefully; but no mouse was there, and she saw instead a little hole at the bottom of the cage, through which the little creature must have crept out.

Nurse and Fanny looked everywhere for it, but in vain. At last nurse said,—

"Miss Fanny, I think you had better ask Anne if she has seen your mouse."

Anne was the cook, and Fanny ran eagerly down to her, and said,—

"O Anne! I have lost my little mouse. Have you seen it anywhere?"

But Anne replied, "No, Miss Fanny; but here comes Eliza—she may have seen it."

Eliza was the housemaid, and Fanny asked her the same question. Alas! Eliza had not seen the mouse either. But she added, "I will look for it, Miss Fanny, and I hope I shall find it."

Then little Fanny ran to her mamma, and said,—

"Mamma, my little mouse has run away. It has got out of a hole in its cage. I cannot find it anywhere. Nurse and I have looked for it, and

Anne and Eliza have not seen it. Have you seen it?"

"No, my dear," said her mother, "I am sorry to say I have not seen it."

And then Fanny put her arms round her mamma's neck, for she was only a very little girl, and began to cry.

Her mamma kissed her, and stroked her hair, and said,—

"My darling, I am very sorry that you have lost your little mouse; but crying won't find it. Dry your eyes, and run away and play with your dolls. I will give orders to all the servants to look for it; and I hope it will be found."

Now Fanny was generally a very obedient little girl, and tried to please her mother; so she wiped her eyes, and ran away to her dolls. She gave them their breakfast, and then was sorry to find that one of them was sick, so she was obliged to undress it and put it into its bed.

And then it was time for lessons; and after lessons, she went out to walk with nurse. When she came in, it was dinner-time; and after dinner, she went out again to walk with her mamma. And so the day passed by. And though every now and then she thought of her little mouse, she

determined to try and please her dear mamma; and so she resolutely put away the thought of her mouse, and began to think of something else that was pleasant. Sometimes she counted how many dolls she had; then she thought of the flowers in her garden, or of her pretty paint-box, or of something that made her feel that she should be very happy and cheerful.

At last it was time for little Fanny to go to bed. Her nurse had taught her to fold her night-gown neatly up every morning, and put it into a little basket which stood on the chest of drawers.

Fanny, as usual, went for her night-gown to give to nurse. She lifted it up, and in the corner of the basket she saw something that looked like a little brown ball. It was getting dark, and she could not see very well; but when she looked again, she was sure the little ball had a long bushy tail.

She ran softly to nurse, and said, "Nurse, nurse! I think my little mouse is in the basket."

Nurse said, "Run quickly, Miss Fanny, and bring your cage."

Nurse took a handkerchief, and went softly up to the basket, and saw that the little ball was indeed Fanny's mouse. She threw the handker-

chief quickly over it, and caught it, and put it into its cage ; but she took care to close up the hole so that the little truant could not escape again.

You may imagine what a happy little girl was Fanny when she went to bed that night. She was very happy at having found her little mouse again, but still more happy in feeling that she had been obedient and cheerful, and had not made other people uncomfortable and herself unhappy by crying for her little brown mouse.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE BUTTERFLY.

"A flutter of wings, a gleam of light,  
No thought of trouble or strife,  
A beauty faded at elose of day—  
A butterfly's life."—ANON.



**D**URING the week of Aunt Mary's visit Johnnie and Fanny were allowed to have a holiday. It was early summer, and they were out almost all day, for the weather was very charming.

One morning, to gratify the wishes of the children, their mother and aunt had ordered their chairs to be carried out to the lawn, and had taken their work out with them. Nurse was walking about with baby, and Ellen the under-nurse was gathering branches of hawthorn, which was then in full bloom, for the other children.

Johnnie was lying on the grass beside his mother, and was preparing to read his "Tales of a Grandfather" to her, when their attention was



GATHERING THE HAWTHORN.



attracted by the sound of a chirping and fluttering in the grass, and looking round they saw a young jackdaw near them. It was evidently just learning to fly, and could only go a very short distance, and kept very close to the ground. The poor little thing was so terrified that it could not see its mother, though she was whirling round and round in the air, and calling to it with a most anxious cry to come back to the field from whence it had strayed, and where she herself was, and which was separated by a paling from the lawn.

Little Fido, Aunt Mary's dog, who was lying beside his mistress, jumped up, and began chasing the little bird, and would soon have seized and killed it, had not Johnnie's mother risen quickly from her seat, and going towards it, was just in time to catch and save it.

Little Chrissie at that moment ran up with a bunch of hawthorn in her hand, and on seeing the jackdaw, said, "Mamma, will you give that little bird to me? I will put it into my empty cage."

"No, darling," said her mother; "we will let the poor little thing away. Don't you hear how its mother is calling to it? You would not like any one to take you away from me;" and so saying, she put it back into the field.

Immediately they saw the old mother fly down to the young bird and chirrup round it, and then lead it by short flights further away into the field.

Then Johnnie's mother resumed her work, and he began reading.

But they were soon again interrupted by Chrissie coming up and saying,—

“O mamma, look what I have caught! Such a lovely butterfly!” And opening her little fat hand, she showed them a very beautiful brown butterfly, but so sadly crushed by her tight grasp that it did not move.

“It is indeed a lovely butterfly,” said Fanny. “But, Chrissie, you have killed it; see, it is quite dead.”

“No, Fanny, it is not dead,” replied Chrissie, bursting into tears. “How can you say it is!—Is it dead, mamma?”

“Yes, I am afraid it is dead, my darling,” replied her mother.

“I am so sorry, mamma; I will never catch a butterfly again. I did not mean to kill it, and its mother will be calling for it, poor little thing,” said the little girl.

“The butterfly has no mother, Chrissie,” said

Johnnie, laughing. "The butterfly is an insect; it is not like a bird."

"It has a mother, Johnnie, just like the little bird.—Has it not, mamma?"

"No, dear Chrissie; Johnnie is quite right. It has not a mother. Have you ever seen a caterpillar?"

"Yes, mamma; Fanny had one in a box, but she let it away."

"I am glad she did so, for she could not have kept it alive. But if she could, you would have seen the caterpillar, after a little while, creep into a corner of the box and lie very still and quiet. Then it would draw a very fine thread of silk out of its body, which it would twist round and round itself till it was quite covered up. This is called a cocoon; and if Fanny had taken away the silk, she would have seen, not a caterpillar, but a little hard brown thing, like a withered leaf. And then it is called a chrysalis. But if Fanny had left the silk, and had been very careful not to hurt the cocoon, by-and-by there would have come out of it,—can you tell me what, Fanny?"

"A butterfly, mamma?"

"Yes, a butterfly—or rather a moth; for this that Chrissie has brought to us is not a true

butterfly, but a moth: the caterpillar of the butterfly, I believe, does not cover its chrysalis with silk; it is only the caterpillar of the moth that does so. But both the butterfly and the moth lay numbers and numbers of little tiny eggs, Chrissie, so small that you can scarcely see them, and out of every egg comes a little tiny caterpillar."

"And does the butterfly take care of the eggs, mamma, and sit on them like our hens?" asked Chrissie.

"No, my dear; it puts its eggs on a leaf of any plant or tree that the little caterpillars will like to eat when they come out of the eggs. But it has no sense, no feeling. It is not like our hens and ducks, and the sparrows and robins, which take care of their eggs. It is what is called an insect, and it does not know anything about the little caterpillars that come out of its eggs. Do you know the name of any other creature that lays eggs? I think you have seen them in your picture-book. As well as birds, I mean."

Chrissie could not answer.

"Can you tell me, Fanny?"

Whilst Fanny was hesitating, Johnnie said, "Snakes lay eggs, mamma."

"Yes, quite right; snakes lay eggs, and so do

lizards, and the dreadful crocodiles. They are all called reptiles. But can you remember any other creature, and a most useful one too, that lays eggs? It lives in the sea. Now, you must remember."

"Oh, of course, mamma, I was forgetting; you mean fish. But none of these creatures take care of their eggs, do they? It is only birds that do so."

"Fish certainly take no care of their eggs, and only some snakes take a little care of theirs; but some insects are not so neglectful. Can you tell me their name, Fanny? They give us honey."

"Oh, you mean bees," said Fanny. "But do bees lay eggs, mamma?"

"Certainly they do; and not only so, but they place these eggs in different cells in their hive. Out of them come very, very tiny caterpillars, or grubs, as they are called; and the bees give these grubs different kinds of food, for according to the food the grub gets, it will turn into a queen bee, or a drone, or a working bee. And wasps do the same, and are as careful of their eggs as the bees can be."

"I wish all the wasps were killed," said Fanny.

"Poor wasps!" said her mother, smiling; "they will do you no harm if you don't touch them."

"O mamma!" said Johnnie, "old James hates them; he says they destroy his fruit."

"Well, certainly, they do injure his pears and apricots; they are not so useful as bees."

"Bees, I suppose, are the only insects that are of any use," said Fanny.

"No, my dear, they are not the only ones. What is that scarf round your neck made of?"

"Silk, I think."

"Yes; and Johnnie will tell you who gives us silk."

"The silkworm, to be sure. Mamma, I wish I could get some silkworm's eggs."

"It is not very easy to do so, but we will try. However, I don't think you will like to have them, as they are very troublesome."

"I thought you knew, Fanny," added her mother, "that the silk of which dresses are made is all spun by a little caterpillar. This caterpillar, as I told you before, when it is about to become a chrysalis, winds an immense quantity of silk round itself. Most of our silk comes from the south of France and from Italy. Can you remember what I told you a caterpillar is called when it has enclosed itself in silk?"

"I think you said a cocoon, mamma."

"Quite right. But you must remember that it is not the caterpillar itself that is called a cocoon, but the silken case which it has made. Out of a few of these cocoons the moths are allowed to eat their way, so that they may lay eggs; but as they cut the silk thread through and through by doing this, most of the cocoons are placed in boiling water, so as to kill the insect, and then the silk is wound carefully off and made into material for dresses."

"Do you remember, Johnnie," his mother continued, "from what country the silkworm was originally brought? But it is not likely that you should know. It was brought from China by some missionaries who had been sent there by a very famous Roman emperor called Justinian. These missionaries had great difficulty in accomplishing their task, and concealed the eggs inside hollow canes; for the Chinese government was very jealous about the silkworm, and very anxious to prevent its being taken out of the country. And these monks were so clever, too, that they not only managed to bring the eggs of the silkworm moth with them, but also to bring slips of the mulberry-tree as well. The silkworm feeds on the leaves of the mulberry-tree, and the one would have been useless without the other."

"Is the moth of the silkworm very pretty?" asked Fanny.

"No, indeed, it is not; it is of a dull gray colour, not nearly so pretty as this moth Chrissie caught. In what else are moths and butterflies like birds, Fanny, besides laying eggs?"

Then seeing that Fanny looked a little puzzled, her mother added with a smile,—

"What sort of *clothes* do birds wear? What have they to keep them warm?"

"Feathers, of course, mamma."

"Yes, they have feathers; and so have butterflies and moths.—Johnnie, run into the house, dear, and ask your father if we may use his little microscope. You will find it on his dressing-table."

Johnnie was soon back again with the microscope, and his mother showed her children the beautiful little feathers on the insect through it.

"The old Greeks called the butterfly *Psyche*, Johnnie," she said, "which was also their word for *soul*; and from that they made a very beautiful story called 'Cupid and Psyche,' which I must tell you some day. It gives an account of poor Psyche's sufferings. Cupid, you remember, was the god of love; and they meant, I think, that the soul could




not live without love. And by giving the butterfly the same name as the soul, these wise heathen wished to point out that man, during his life on this earth, was like the creeping, almost blind caterpillar; and that, as the butterfly rises out of its sleep as a chrysalis, so does the soul of man rise from the sleep of death with his body made as glorious and beautiful as is the butterfly's. Let us learn from them, heathen though they were; and from the things we see around us, let us strive to realize the truth of those things that are invisible.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE GARDEN.

"Look now abroad. All creatures see  
How they are filled with life and glee;  
The little rabbits, too, are out,  
And leverets skipping all about:  
For life, in the glad days of spring,  
Doth gladden each created thing.  
Now let us to the garden go,  
And dig and delve, and plant and sow;  
The fresh dark mould is rich and sweet,  
And each flower-plot is trim and neat."

MARY HOWITT.

JOHNNIE and Fanny had finished their lessons, and their mother told them they might play in the garden instead of walking with nurse.

This was a great treat, for they liked running about on the grass. This garden was not like most other gardens. There were a great many lime and beech trees in it, and many others which are usually called forest trees, as well as lilacs and laburnums. There was also plenty of grass, with flower-beds cut out of the smooth green turf.

In spring time it was a great pleasure to the children to watch the tiny cases in which the leaves of the trees were rolled up gradually swelling out and becoming larger, until at last they burst, and the tender green leaves came forth.

And then the different flowers appeared. There was the graceful yellow pea of the laburnum, and the rich purple of the lilac, and the fragrant delicate green of the lime. All these they loved to notice. But their greatest pleasure of all was to watch James Wilson, the gardener, at his work.

James was very kind to them, and helped them with their rabbits and pigeons, and used to allow them to try and assist him with his work.

Their father had given them each a little garden, upon condition that they took care of it themselves, and James showed them how to prepare the ground for their plants and seeds, and then how to place them in it.

Their little plots of ground were in a corner of the garden beside the greenhouse. They had each of them a yellow jasmine and a honeysuckle, both of which climbed up the wall. Round the border in front was a row of crocuses of different colours; behind them a line of red daisies and primroses, which were placed turn about; and

behind that again the tall and elegant London pride. In one corner of each garden were some plants of sweet-scented violets, in another some snowdrops.

James had also given them, as a great treasure, three scarlet and yellow tulip bulbs. In the very middle of their gardens was a rose-bush, with a carnation and fuchsia on each side. And also there was a little corner left for sweet-pea. But James advised them not to sow any other annuals; for he said they were too young to know the difference between the leaves of weeds and annuals, and they must be very careful to pick away every weed as it appeared. And they trusted him entirely, for they found that by his arrangement there was some flower in bloom in their garden every month of the year.

On this morning they ran to him in a great hurry, for they saw he was planting out some scarlet geraniums, and he had promised to give them each a plant.

They stood and watched how he made a hole in the soft brown mould with his wooden dibble; then he filled up each hole with water; and last of all, he put in the geranium, and pressed the earth firmly round it.

"Now that I see how you plant your geraniums, James," said Johnnie, "I think I could put both mine and Fanny's into our gardens, if you will lend me your dibble."

"That I will do willingly, Master Johnnie. There is nothing like trying; and when you have planted them, if you and Miss Fanny will come with me, I have something to show you that I am sure will please you."

"What is it, James? what is it?" cried both the children at once, throwing down their plants. "Oh come and show us at once!"

But James was not to be persuaded. "No, no, Miss Fanny," he said; "work first, and play afterwards. We must put in your geraniums, and then I will show you."

Fanny then ran off to fill her little water-pot with water, so that no time might be lost whilst Johnnie made the holes. When the geraniums were planted, the gardener said, "Now come with me to the rabbit-hutch."

The rabbit-hutch was a large wooden box placed upon an old table, or rather it was made of two boxes placed side by side. From one of these boxes two of the sides had been cut away, and slender iron rods had been put instead, so that it

was easy to see any animal inside it. The other was left quite dark, but in one of the sides was a door, with a bolt to keep it fast; and between the two boxes a hole had been cut to enable the rabbit to go from the one to the other. But the children found on arriving that a piece of matting had been put over the open box so as to keep it dark.

"O James! why have you covered up the hutch?" said Fanny.

"You shall see, Miss Fanny; but remember you must be very quiet if I let you look in."

"Oh yes, I will," said Fanny. "I will be very quiet, I promise you."

James took off the matting, and unfastened the bolt of the side door, and lifting the little girl up in his arms, he let her look into the dark box with the closed sides.

And there she saw Johnnie's large black and white lop-eared rabbit crouching in one corner, and round her and underneath her were funny little things that looked like bits of flesh, but they were so hidden by the hay in the box that Fanny could scarcely see them.

"What is in the hutch with old Cross Patch?" said she. Cross Patch was the name Johnnie had

given to his rabbit, because she was very cross and savage.

"Those are young ones, Miss Fanny, nine of them ; they are quite blind, and will be blind for some days."

"Now let me see them," said Johnnie.

"Let me take another look first," replied Fanny. So she took another good look, and then her brother was lifted up ; but neither of them could see the young rabbits very distinctly, for the old mother seemed to make herself bigger than ever, and contrived to screen her little ones almost entirely from observation.

When Johnnie was lifted down, the gardener carefully fastened the door, and placed the matting over the hutch.

"Why do you do that, James ?" said the children.

"To keep the hutch dark," he replied. "Cross Patch, as you call her, is very savage just now. She cannot bear the light, and does not like any one to look at her. You must not go near her again to-day. If you do, she will most likely eat her young."

"O James! how shocking!" said Fanny ; "how wicked of her!"

"Well, she's only a rabbit," said James, "and likes to be left quiet."

Again the children promised they would not disturb her, but they could think and talk of nothing else.

When they came downstairs after dinner to their papa, Fanny clambered up on his knee as usual, and told him about Cross Patch and her numerous family.

"O Fanny, I have got a better rabbit than Cross Patch!" said Willie, an elder brother of Fanny. "My rabbit is quite tame, and goes with me everywhere."

"Where, Willie—where is your rabbit?" said little Chrissie.

"There it is, Chrissie—there, above the sofa," replied Willie, pulling the chair on which the little girl was seated close beside him.

Chrissie looked to the place, and there on the wall appeared the head of a rabbit. She was very much astonished, and begged to be lifted down, and allowed to go to the sofa to look for Willie's rabbit.

"How can you be such a goose, Chrissie?" said Johnnie, laughing. "Don't you see it is only the shadow of Willie's fingers? Look, I can make a rabbit."



"I don't believe you can, Johnnie," said his brother.

Johnnie tried, and tried again, but in vain. At last Willie had to show him how to do it. Then his mamma tried, but she did not succeed very well. And last of all his father tried, and he did it better than any one else. His rabbit was the most perfect of all.

The next morning the two children were out before breakfast, and ran to the garden in the hopes of finding James Wilson. He was not to be seen. They went to his house, and were much disappointed to learn that he had gone to a flower show that day, and was not to be home till night. They went disconsolately towards the house, and there at the front door they saw their brother Willie, to whom they told their sorrows, and begged him to take them to see Cross Patch.

He agreed at once to do so, but told Fanny first to get some old tea-leaves from cook to feed Cross Patch.

As Willie was standing holding Fanny in his arms, whilst she was putting the tea-leaves into the hutch, old Pluto, his father's black retriever, came barking and jumping about. He leapt up to say good-morning to Fanny, and in so doing



THE RABBIT ON THE WALL.

gave the hutch a terrible shake. Cross Patch started, and rushed away into the other part of the hutch. Willie put his sister quickly down, fastened the door, and put on the matting; but he looked very grave, and said,—

“I much fear Pluto has done terrible mischief, and that Cross Patch will eat her young ones. We must not go near her till the evening.”

Alas! when evening came, Willie’s fears were found to be only too true. Old James went to give her food on his return, and found her sitting looking very sulky in a corner of her hutch, and all the little rabbits gone. She had eaten every one. Poor little Fanny cried very bitterly.

Johnnie felt that, as he was a boy, he must not give way to tears, and he tried to console his little sister, but without much success.

Old James, too, tried to comfort them both. “Don’t be down-hearted, Master Johnnie,” he said; “it was all an accident. You were quite right to give her food; and you could not tell that Pluto would come up just then and shake her. I daresay she will soon have another brood, and we will take good care, if she has, that she is not disturbed.”

Their father and mother were very sorry to hear of how badly Cross Patch had behaved.

"But, papa," said Johnnie, "why should Cross Patch dislike any one seeing her young so much?"

"Well, my dear, consider for a minute. Do you know where wild rabbits make their nests for their young?"

"No."

"They dig long passages, or burrows, as they are called, deep down into the ground. Rabbits are social animals, and make their burrows near each other, so that they constantly join and cross each other; and all these burrows, thus joined, form what is called a warren. But the mother rabbit is not satisfied even with the darkness and quietness of the burrows where all the other rabbits are. She generally makes a long tunnel or burrow for herself, at the end of which she makes the nest for her young. So now you can understand why your rabbit liked her young ones to be kept dark and quiet."

"Papa, you said just now that rabbits were social animals. What does that mean?"

"Can you answer Fanny's question, Johnnie?"

"I think so, papa; social animals mean animals that live together."

"You are pretty nearly right, but not quite so, my boy. Can you tell me the names of any animals that live together?"

"Yes, papa; sheep," said Fanny.

"Any others?"

"Cows, papa. And are there not numbers of wild horses that live together?"

"Yes; there are great herds of wild horses both in Tartary and America. But horses, sheep, and cows are gregarious animals, not social. The word gregarious will puzzle you even more than social, Fanny. It is used to describe animals which live together in flocks or herds, as sheep and cattle do; but generally there is only one male amongst the number, the rest are all females. You know there never can be more than one bull in a field. If there were two, they would certainly fight. And these animals live together, eating, and sleeping, and roaming about together from place to place, and it is all the same to them where they feed and sleep, provided they can find good pasture, and shelter amongst trees and rocks from the heat or the inclemency of the weather.

"But this is not the case with social animals. Rabbits live in their warrens in families, parents and little ones all together; and though, if it were

out in a very violent storm, a rabbit might seek shelter in a hole, it is to its own warren that it would always endeavour to return. And this is the case with all social animals. They have what may be called a *home*, which gregarious animals never have, unless it is provided for them by man. And now, Johnnie, can you tell me the name of the principal social animal?"

Johnnie, after thinking for a minute, replied, "Do you mean the beaver, papa? I know beavers all live together in houses which they make for themselves."

"The beaver is not the animal I mean. It is undoubtedly a wonderful creature, and most truly social; for beavers not only build their marvellous huts, which resemble those of the Esquimaux, close beside each other, but they unite together to build a dam for the benefit of the community. You know, Fanny," he continued, "that beavers live almost more in the water than out of it. Their houses are built close by the side of a rapidly running river; and as they would perish if the river were to become dry, and as also they like to have the water as level as possible, they construct dams, which are simply walls from the one bank of the river to the other. These dams are sometimes

more than two hundred feet in length, and are made of stones and mud and bits of trees. And they do not trust to fallen trees, or to pieces of wood lying about, for their dams, but with their strong, sharp teeth they gnaw through the trunk of a standing tree, and when by this means they have brought it to the ground, they again gnaw it into pieces the size they require for their dams; and all this is done by the whole community working happily together.

“But, wonderful as the beaver is, it is not so wonderful as the bee or the wasp. Bees and wasps, I think you know, Johnnie, obey laws. They have a queen, whose movements they always follow. Each particular insect has its own work assigned to it: some gather the honey, others build the cells, and others, again, are nurses for the young; and they all attend to their different duties with perfect regularity. Each bee does its own work, and never attempts to do the work of any of its companions.

“There are many caterpillars, too, which make nests of their silken threads in common. I was reading the other day an account of the caterpillar of the small ermine moth. It is almost impossible to save any tree which these insects attack. The

small birds are no assistance to the gardener, and dare not attempt to devour them; for with the most wonderful rapidity these caterpillars in great numbers stretch their long silken threads from one branch of the tree to another, and cross them so closely, that any small bird that should attempt to fly against them would find itself as hopelessly entangled in these silken meshes as a fly is caught in a spider's web.\*

"There are small birds, too, in Africa, which assemble together to build a roof in a tree, and under this roof build their separate nests. Besides these there are many other social birds and insects, about all of which I hope you will read for yourselves by-and-by.

"But, undoubtedly, the most wonderful of them all is the ant. The more that we learn about this little insect, the more are our admiration and curiosity excited. These extraordinary little creatures have no queen as the bees have, but they obey laws as implicitly, and each has its regular work assigned to it. They have armies, too, and one nest of ants will attack another in regular order. What do they fight about? They fight principally to get prisoners and to get *cows*."

\* Rev. J. G. Wood, "Homes without Hands," page 443.



"*Cows*, papa!"

"Yes. You remember the little green insects which infest your mother's greenhouse plants, and which the gardener washes away so carefully. These are the ants' *cows*. There are two little points, somewhat like horns, near the tail of this green insect, which, by the way, is called an aphid, and when gently rubbed these little horns exude little drops of liquid sweet as honey. This rubbing the ants do with their own little horns, or antennæ; and as they are very fond of this juice, in order that they may always have this delicacy they actually carry off these green insects to their houses below the ground, where they provide them with proper food, as our farmers attend to their cows. And, besides, they carefully preserve the eggs of the aphides, and as carefully nourish and protect the young ones, so that their dairies never may be empty." \*

"How very extraordinary, papa! And then about their slaves?"

"Strange to say, the slaves are black ants, which have been carried off as prisoners by the red ants, and are compelled to do all the hard work. They have to build the houses, carry the

\* H. B. Tristram in "Good Words for Young," 1869.

food, and attend to the nurseries, whilst their masters, or rather mistresses, spend their time principally in fighting."

"Then, I suppose, papa, you consider the ant the most wonderful of all social animals."

"No, my dear. Wonderful as all these creatures are, man is more wonderful still. He is the chief, the principal social animal."

"Man, papa? but man is not an animal!"

"Indeed he is. In common with what we call the inferior animals, he has flesh and blood and bones. He requires along with them air to breathe, light, and warmth, and shelter from the weather. But tell me in what he differs."

"He is able to speak."

"True, Fanny, he is able to speak; but being able to speak would not be of much use if he were not different otherwise."

"He is able to know about God," said Johnnie.

"Yes, my dear boy; he has a soul, by means of which he is able to understand and believe that God is his Father; he is able to learn what God has told us about himself, and to know the difference between right and wrong, good and evil.

"But it was not to his superiority in this respect that I wished to direct your thoughts. Animals,


you are aware, never can improve. The dam a beaver constructs now is no better and no worse than the dam constructed by beavers thousands of years ago. Wonderful as the ants are, their dwellings are not in any way different from those built by the first ants. But the houses we live in now are very different from the rude huts built in former ages by our forefathers. God has given to the lower animals a faculty which is called instinct, by which they are directed to make their dwellings and provide food for themselves and their young. But to man he has given reason, and the power of thinking, of preserving, and of improving. These are precious gifts bestowed upon us all. Cherish these gifts, my dear children, and remember that the more you cultivate them the more will they be strengthened. It is most true that 'to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.'"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RABBITS.

" I saw the glorious sun arise  
From yonder mountain gray ;  
And as he travelled through the skies,  
The darkness went away,  
And all around me was so bright,  
I wished it would be always light."

JANE TAYLOR.

 OHNNIE'S father had given him a pretty little toy-ship as a present on his last birthday. It had been a great pleasure to him, and, whenever the weather permitted, he and his sisters had taken it to a little river near their father's house and sailed it.

But the mast had got broken and the sails much torn, and so the ship had been put aside for some time. Willie, however, had taken great pains to mend it. He had made a new mast, and had fastened on a new sail which his mother had stitched. He had also repainted the ship, and had printed the name " Fanny " on it.

It was all ready for use, and the two boys had arranged that they and their sisters were to sail it in the little river on the day after Cross Patch had eaten her young ones.

But when Johnnie's lessons were finished, and he went to look for his brother, Willie could nowhere be found. He asked his mother about him, but all she knew was that Willie had gone out immediately after breakfast, and had mentioned that he intended to take a long walk, and might not be home till late in the afternoon.

So Johnnie very disconsolately took his boat to the river, accompanied by his two sisters. He was so cross and vexed at Willie's absence that he would not have gone, only he had promised them to sail his boat on that morning. As it was, he lay on the grass without speaking a word, feeling very cross, watching his little vessel.

And yet he might have been very happy. It was a lovely day. The little stream flowed past a meadow full of rich grass, and some very tall trees stood close beside it. A pretty little water-wag-tail came and hopped on a stone close beside the children. It jerked its tail, and put its head first on one side and then on the other, as if it wondered who the intruders could be. And the wood-



**SAILING THE BOAT.**

pigeons cooed sweetly up among the trees, and occasionally a wild rabbit scampered across the grass. But Johnnie could not be happy, and could not help thinking of Willie's unkindness and forgetfulness.

At last it was time for them to go back to dinner, but even then their brother had not returned.

"I wonder where Willie can have gone to," Johnnie said when dinner was nearly finished.

Just as he had uttered these words, Willie entered the room, looking very hot and flushed, as if he had been walking very fast, and carrying a little basket with a lid to it in his hand.

"Look here, Fanny," he said, "at what I have brought for you and Johnnie," and lifting up the lid of the basket, he showed them two tiny little rabbits, perfectly white, with long soft hair and pink eyes. "I hope, Johnnie," he continued, "you were not much disappointed at my not going with you this morning to sail your boat. I was not quite sure that I could get these rabbits, so I said nothing about them."

Johnnie felt very much ashamed when he remembered how cross he had felt all the morning, and all the unkind thoughts he had indulged in, and he thanked his brother with glistening eyes.

Fanny flung her arms round Willie's neck and kissed and hugged him. "O Willie, how kind, how very kind you are!" she said.—"Are not the rabbits lovely, mamma?"

Her mamma thought them very pretty indeed. And now came the question where the rabbits were to be kept. Of course they could not be put near Cross Patch, for she would certainly kill them. Willie said that if his mother would give him an old tea-chest he thought he could, with James Wilson's help, make them a hutch.

His mother gave him the tea-chest, and after a couple of hours' work he had made a very nice little hutch, with wooden instead of iron bars to the front, and with a little door fastened by a wooden bolt at the side. It was placed on a couple of stones beneath the window of Willie's bedroom, which was on the ground-floor, and looked toward the south. This spot was thought to be the warmest and most sheltered that could be found for them.

The little rabbits grew rapidly. Fanny's was the larger, and she called it Snowball. Johnnie's was named Tiny. Snowball had a blue ribbon fastened round his neck, and Tiny a green one; for it was found that red or pink did not look well



with the colour of their eyes. They soon became very tame, and the children had them constantly beside them when they were playing on the lawn, and old Pluto was taught that he must not touch them. Every night they were put back into their hutch, and the bolt firmly fastened.

It was the middle of June. One morning, very early, about sunrise, Willie was awakened by hearing a curious kind of growling outside his window, and then he heard what seemed to him to be the rabbits squealing. He listened, and again the growling was repeated. He jumped up at once, for now he knew that the growling was made by a cat. He flung open the window, and saw the hutch dragged off the stones, and partly overturned, and the door stood wide open. A huge gray cat, which he recognized as belonging to a neighbouring farm, was crouching down in the grass ready to spring upon poor little Tiny, who lay trembling close to the wall. He threw a boot at the cat, and hastily putting on a few clothes, scrambled out at the window. He tenderly lifted the terrified rabbit, but, as far as he could see, she was not in the least hurt, not a scratch or wound was visible.

He searched for Snowball, but in vain. "Alas,

poor Snowball!" he said to himself, "that wicked cat must have killed you. How grieved little Fanny will be!" He took Tiny into his room, and put her into his fishing-basket, and gave her some biscuits. And then he went out again to make another search for Snowball, but again he was unsuccessful.

Every now and then, however, he stopped to gaze at the beauties around him. He had never been up so early before, and had never before seen the sun rise at that time of the year. Well as he knew every distant mountain top, and the moor, and the fields, and the trees about his father's house, never had he seen them look so beautiful, bathed as they were in the early rays of the sun. And never had he seen such colours in the sky as those that surrounded the sun in his majesty—crimson and green and orange clouds floated around him. Willie's heart swelled within him as he gazed at the wonderful beauty of the scene and felt that the great Creator of it all was his heavenly Father.

He slowly retraced his steps towards the house, and sighed again as he thought of poor little Snowball.

Great was the grief of the children when at

breakfast they heard of Willie's adventures; but greater still was their astonishment, on looking out of the window, to see Snowball gambolling about the lawn. Snowball it certainly was: the blue ribbon was round his neck, and Tiny was in the fishing-basket, with the green ribbon round hers.

Snowball was soon caught, or rather required no catching, he was so tame, and was found to have escaped, like Tiny, without a single scratch. It was conjectured that the cat must have dragged the hutch off the stones, and that in consequence the bolt of the door had given way, and that, whilst the cat had been terrifying Tiny, Snowball had made his escape.

"How glad I am they are both safe!" said Fanny. "We must take better care of them in future."

But, alas! poor Tiny, although she had not sustained any apparent injury, died that afternoon. James Wilson said the fright had broken her heart. Johnnie was very sorry, but he was glad it was his rabbit and not Fanny's that was killed.

After Tiny's death Snowball became tamer than ever. His hutch was removed into the washing-house, where he slept all night. But he was

allowed to run about during the day; and the moment any of the children appeared, he ran to meet them, and followed them about like a little dog; and as they sat on the grass reading or making daisy chains, if he thought he was forgotten, he would scamper up to them and jump into their laps, and lick their hands, as much as to say, "I do not like to be neglected."


## CHAPTER V.

### THE SWING.

“ The Power that formed the violet,  
The all-creating One,  
He made the stately cedar trees  
That crowned Mount Lebanon.

“ And royal was the cedar  
Above all other trees ;  
They chose of old its scented wood  
In kingly palaces.

“ In the temple of Jerusalem  
That glorious temple old,  
They only found the cedar wood  
To match with carved gold.”—MARY HOWITT.



THE 28th of June was Fanny's birthday, and, at her own wish, her father agreed to give her a swing as his present ; but the difficulty was where to put it. The day before the birthday, Fanny, and her father, and mother, and Johnnie, walked round about the place looking at all the various trees ; but some were too small, and the branches of the larger trees were, in general, too high up. At last an old oak that stood

near the dairy was fixed upon, and John Helin, the carpenter, who accompanied them, was directed to fasten up the swing to one of its gigantic branches that afternoon.

“But won’t this little fir tree beside it be in the way, papa?” said Johnnie.

“James Wilson can remove it elsewhere,” said his father. “It is still such a seedling that I think it may live, though this is not a very good time of the year for the experiment.”

“Why should that be, papa?” said Fanny.

“Because it is at present too full of sap. You know, plants take up water and other nourishment from the ground by their roots, and this nourishment produces a fluid called sap, which is to plants what blood is to animals. At this season all plants are very full of this sap, which is apt to be checked by transplanting them. But I hope this little tree will survive the experiment; and if it does not, the wood will make famous logs for the fire. Can you tell me, Fanny, what the wood of the fir tree is called?”

“I can,” exclaimed Johnnie. “It is called deal.”

“You are right; it is the wood that you see so much of in our carpenters’ sheds. It is well

fitted for building purposes, as the wood is not only long and straight, but is also very firm and pliable. Look at our old Scotch fir near the shrubbery and compare it with this oak. You see how much straighter the trunk of the fir is."

"O papa! I thought the oak was chief among trees, the most useful and beautiful of them all, and the largest."

"I admire the oak as much as you can. But can you tell me any of its uses, Johnnie?"

"Well, papa, I think I have heard you say that the wood of the oak is valuable, on account of its hardness, for building ships; and then, are not acorns used in the south of Europe for feeding pigs?"

"You are quite right, they are; and not only so, but the acorns and bark, and even the acorn cups, are of very great use in manufactures, in all dye-works and tanneries.—You know, Fanny, a tannery is a place where the skins of animals are prepared and turned into leather. And cork likewise is a portion of the bark of one species of oak which grows in the south of Europe.—And you are also correct, Johnnie, in saying that the timber or proper wood of the oak is most valuable. No doubt it has been greatly superseded by the use of iron, but at one time our navy was almost entirely built

of it, so much so that a brave and good old sailor, Admiral Collingwood, planted a certain number of acorns every year, and said it was the duty of every true patriot to do so. But useful and beautiful as the oak is, it is not so useful or so beautiful as the fir, nor can it compare in size with some species of the fir or pine tribe. Can you or Fanny tell me where it is mentioned in the Bible?"

After a little hesitation, Johnnie replied, "I know; it is said in the Psalms, 'The fir trees are a dwelling for the stork.'"

"Yes," said his father, "that is true; but don't you also remember that Solomon used it for building the temple?"

"But, papa, he used the cedar, the cedar of Lebanon."

"Well, the cedar is a larch, and therefore belongs to the pine tribe, and is one of the most beautiful trees in the world. There is another kind of cedar which grows on the Himalaya Mountains in India, and is called by the natives the deodar, or 'gift of God.' But the largest, the most gigantic of them all, have been found in California.—Where is California, Fanny?"

Fanny was able to answer, "In North America, papa."



“That is right, dear. I am glad you know. Well, these trees were found by a hunter wandering in search of game. He returned to his companions awe-struck and amazed at the sight he had seen. They would not believe him when he declared that he had discovered a group of trees, all of which, he was convinced, were about three hundred feet in height. They found upon examination, however, that what he had said was true. One enormous tree had fallen down, and was found half-buried in the earth; but from what is left of it, it is supposed that the tree must have been originally four hundred and fifty feet in height. You can imagine what the size must have been when I tell you that our large Scotch fir is about sixty feet, and you know we think it a tall tree. The inside of this huge fir in California has since been hollowed out by fire, and a passage two hundred feet in length has been made through it which is sufficiently lofty to allow a man to walk in it with his hat on. I am sorry to say that another of these trees, and one of the largest of the group, was cut down by the people of San Francisco. The stump was smoothed and used by them for dancing on.”

“What a shame, papa! But how enormously old these trees must be.”

“They are indeed. It is supposed that they are from eight thousand to ten thousand years old. It is impossible to realize what that means. How strange to think that these trees should have been growing in the New World, as we call America, before Adam was created! The wood, as you may imagine, is very black, and almost as hard as metal. One curious fact about the trees belonging to the fir tribe is, that botanists tell us they are not true trees, but a mixture, or link, as they would call it, between trees and ferns. Some ferns, I must tell you, Johnnie, grow in the tropics to the height of forty or fifty feet.”

“But how can they say they are not trees?”

“I cannot explain to you all their reasons; it would take too long a time. But do you know what coal is made of?”

“We dig coal out of the ground, papa.”

“Right, my little girl; but still it must be made of something. It is composed of the remains of trees, and ferns, and plants which grew upon the earth long before man was created, and which have been subjected to the influence of fire and water and pressure. You won't quite understand all this, but it means that before the earth was fit for man's use there grew on it great forests of firs and

ferns, and plants like our mare's tail, only enormous in size, and other plants which now grow in the tropics. These at that time grew in Scotland and England, which were then as hot as India is now. But great earthquakes took place, in consequence of which these forests were covered with earth—mountains and rocks were heaved up and piled on the top of them. And this tremendous weight, along with the intense heat and moisture, have, in the course of thousands of years, produced coal. In these fields of coal no remains of proper fruit-bearing trees are found, no remains of oaks or apple trees, no trees but those of the pine or fir tribe, along with ferns and mosses.\* How grateful should we feel to the Almighty for so caring for our wants and providing us with such a treasure as the fir tree. In its change into coal it is one of the greatest gifts of God. When cut down, it supplies us with material for building our houses. When the tree is alive, we are able, by processes which I have not time to explain, to extract from it turpentine and varnish. Pitch and tar, too, are got from it. These are useful in many countless ways. But its great value is in the tree itself. When standing erect, we may call the forests of these trees the

\* Carpenter's "Vegetable Physiology."

saviours and protectors of the earth and its inhabitants."

"How do you mean, papa?"

"Because fir trees are found in the most mountainous parts of the world. They flourish where no other trees could live. They stand close beside each other, straight and tall, and shelter the country behind them from the cold winds, whether they sweep down from the North Pole, as in Norway, or from the wild Bay of Biscay, as in the Landes of France. On the one side of the forests are storm and desolation, on the other fruitful fields protected by the arms of these friendly giants.

"And wonderfully has God adapted them to this purpose. Let us go and examine our old tree. You will notice that the roots do not go straight down into the earth. They spread over the ground as well as under it, which enables them to get enough soil and nourishment in the rocky and bleak spots of the world in which they flourish.

"You will see, too, that the trunk is covered with this beautiful gray lichen. It is not only an ornament, but it serves to keep the tree warm, and protects the sap from the severe cold of the inclement regions it lives in. Wonderful to relate, this lichen is always found thicker on that side of the

trunk which is most exposed to the fury of the prevailing storms. A knowledge of this fact has often been taken advantage of by the traveller lost in these pathless forests."

"I suppose there is no part of the tree that can be eaten?"

"There is one kind of pine called the stone-pine. It grows at the Cape to an enormous height, and produces an immense number of seeds, of which the natives are very fond, but I do not think we should like them."

"But," said Fanny, "I never saw any seeds on our fir. The cones are not the seeds, are they? No one could eat them."

"No," replied her mother; "the seeds grow between the layers or folds in the cones, and shake out when ripe. But now we must hasten home. It is long past the children's dinner hour, and the little ones will wonder what we are about."

As they came up to the hall door, Johnnie's father said to him, "See, Johnnie, here is a yew tree, another of the larch tribe. Can you tell me what made it so valuable a tree in former times?"

"I don't know, papa."

"Have you never read 'Ivanhoe' and the 'Tales of a Grandfather'?"

"Ah, now I know what you mean. Of course the bows used by archers in former times were made of it. Locksley's bow was made of yew."

"Who was Locksley?" asked Fanny.

"You shall read about him in 'Ivanhoe' when you are older," said her mother, smiling. "And now be quick and get ready for dinner."

When dinner was over, the children begged to be allowed to see the swing put up. Permission was readily granted, and away they ran to the oak tree, where they found the carpenter and James Wilson. The latter had just finished taking up the fir tree, and the former had placed his ladder against the oak, and was preparing to mount to fasten the ropes on to the branch.

It was a very hot day, and John had taken off his coat and thrown it on the grass. A very pretty little black and white puppy was lying on it.

"O John, what a pretty little dog!" said Johnnie. "Is it yours? and what is its name?"

"Yes, Master Johnnie, it is mine," replied John Helin; "and I have called it Don, after an old master of mine. But I am going to drown it."

"Going to drown it! O John, how can you be so cruel! Why are you going to drown it?"

"Well, you see, Miss Fanny, I have so many

dogs, I don't know what to do with them all. But I am sorry for the poor little thing."

"Will you give it to me, John? will you give it to me?" said Johnnie, in great excitement.

"Certainly, Master Johnnie, with pleasure, if your papa will allow you to have it."

Away ran the children past the shrubbery, up the hall steps, through the front door, and burst into their father's study without waiting to knock. They found their father, as usual, very busy with his books and papers. He looked up in amazement at the unusual and unmannerly conduct of the children.

"O papa!" said Johnnie, "John Helin has got such a beautiful little black and white puppy, and he says he is going to drown it. May he give it to me—oh! will you let him give it to me?"

And Fanny added, "O papa, it is so pretty! Pray do let Johnnie have it!"

"Gently, gently," said their father; "what is all this? Explain yourself properly, Johnnie. John Helin going to drown a puppy! What do you mean?"

Then the little boy told his father about the puppy, and when he had finished his father very

kindly left his books, put on his hat, and went with the children to where the carpenter was working.

“Good-morning, John,” he said. “Is this the little dog my boy has been talking about? and do you really wish to part with it?”

“I shall be very glad to give it to Master Johnnie, sir,” said John, touching his hat, “if you will allow him to accept of it. I have already two dogs at home, and my wife does not like my having another.”

“Well, Johnnie, in that case you may have the puppy; but remember I shall expect you to take care of it, and to attend to its food and its comfort. What are you going to call it?”

“O papa,” replied Fanny, “it has already got a name. Its name is Don: it is called after an old master of John’s.”

“Well, then,” said her father, “take Don away to your mother, and ask her where she thinks you should keep him.”

Thus bidden, Johnnie joyfully took the puppy up in his arms and, followed by Fanny, ran off to his mother. She admired the little creature very much, and gave the children an old waste-paper basket for it to sleep in.

“Put a little hay into it,” she said; “and, until



he is older, Don can sleep in your room, Johnnie. And now come with me to the kitchen. I will ask cook to give you some milk for him."


When Don grew a little bigger, however, he was sent to sleep in the kennel with old Pluto. Pluto was a very good old dog, and had a great idea of duty. No sooner was Don put to sleep with him than he seemed to think it was his duty to take care of the little creature and to protect him. He permitted no strange dog to come near him, and always allowed him to sleep at the end of the kennel, so that he might be sheltered from the rain and the wind, and let him have the nicest bones that the cook gave for their dinner. And when the boys and their father went out for long walks, and the two dogs went with them, if little Don became tired he used to run to Pluto and catch hold of one of his ears, and Pluto used to drag him along, just as a nurse would help a little child.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE BIRTHDAY.

“ A charming present comes from town,  
A baby-house so neat,  
With kitchen, parlour, dining-room,  
And chambers all complete.”

JANE TAYLOR.



THE next morning the weather was as beautiful as Fanny could desire. When she came down to breakfast, she found some little present from every one placed beside her plate. Johnnie gave her a purse; Willie's gift was a silver thimble; and even little Chrissie gave her a black and white china dog, which she had bought with her own money, and admired herself very much. Her mamma's present was a doll's house. It had been her own when a child, and she had caused it to be freshly painted and papered and properly furnished for Fanny.

“ O dear mamma ! ” she said, “ how kind of you ! What lovely little dolls ! what beautiful fur-

niture ! And here is a doll dressed like papa ; and this one will do for you, mamma.—And, Chrissie, your china dog will do instead of old Pluto : it will be the watch-dog. But I do wish Ethel and May and Katie would come.”

They were her cousins, and scarcely had she done speaking when the sound of wheels was heard, and running to the window, Fanny saw her uncle’s carriage drive up. “There they are, mamma ! there they are !” she exclaimed, and down she ran.

“Many happy returns of the day to you, dear Fanny !” said they all at once. “We have brought you this canary, for we knew you had not got one ; it is a present from us all. And papa is to give you a very pretty donkey ; but it can’t be here till to-night. Mamma has sent you this little box full of Indian figures.”

“Oh, thank you, dear Ethel,” said Fanny ; “how kind of you ! what a lovely canary ! Every one is so kind. Come and see the doll’s house mamma has given me. And papa has given me a swing. What would you like to do first ? Shall we go to the swing, or play with the doll’s house ?”

Her mother, who had by this time come to the front door, said she thought they should delay playing with the doll’s house till the afternoon, as

the sun would by that time probably be very oppressive, and she advised them to go to the swing whilst the day was fresh and cool. Away, therefore, they all ran to it, and found Johnnie and Willie already there. Nurse and baby followed them, and so did their mamma and little Chrissie. John Helin had done his work most successfully. The ropes were exactly the right length, and the wooden seat was broad and smooth, so that two of the children could swing at the same time, and for more than an hour they continued giving each other swings.

Then, as the cousins had only lately arrived in the neighbourhood, and had spent but little of their lives in the country, they were taken to the garden, and then to the poultry-yard.

“Oh, look!” said Ethel, “look at the hens picking up the gravel. What do they do that for?”

“Because they have no teeth,” said Willie, smiling.

“No teeth. What do you mean?”

“Well, you know, nearly all animals have teeth to chew their food with; but birds have not, and so they—and especially birds which, like hens, eat hard substances, such as seeds and grains—swallow stones, because these stones when in the gizzard

help to soften the food. — But look, here come Chrissie's friends."

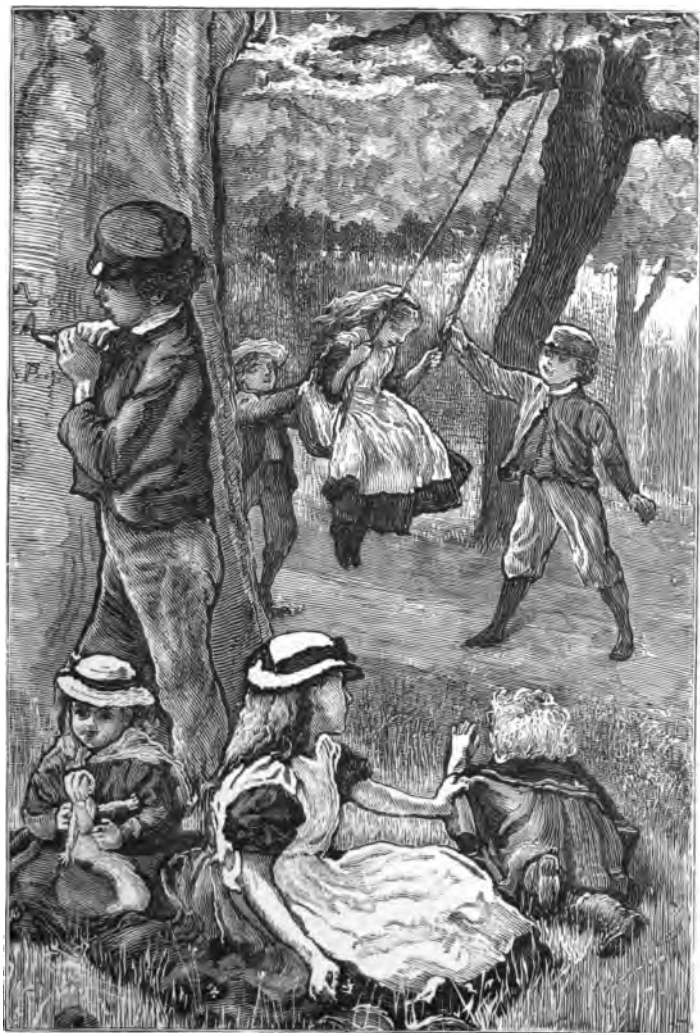
Ethel looked, and saw a goose and a gander, with one single gosling between them, coming to the corner of the yard the children were standing in. They stretched out their long necks, and hissed, and seemed prepared to bite every one with their hard yellow beaks.

Little Chrissie no sooner saw them than she gave a little cry and ran up to her brother. He laughed, and, taking her up in his arms, said,—

"I think you are a little gosling yourself, Chrissie. They won't do you any harm. See, here is some corn you can give them, and then we must turn them out on the grass.—That poor goose," he added, turning to his cousins, "laid eleven eggs, and only this solitary little gosling came out, and the old goose and gander are as proud of it as any mother could be of her child. They always walk on each side of it, so as to guard it from danger, and hiss if any one comes near."

"And now," said Fanny, "come round and look at the rabbits. I am sure you will think Cross Patch a beauty."

"And then," said Willie, "we must go in to dinner."



THE SWING.

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The heat had become so great, and the sun was so oppressive, that after dinner the children were glad to follow the advice of Fanny's mother and remain in the house.

They went to the day nursery, and Fanny opened the box Aunt Jane had sent to her. She found it contained about a dozen little figures, made of red earth, about two inches in height, representing Hindu servants.

"Oh, how pretty!" said Fanny. "Tell me what they are, May. Do you know?"

"Yes; one is a syce, or groom, and that one is a bearer."

"Let us play with them in the doll's house, Fanny," said Ethel. "See, this doll shall be mamma when she was in India; and here is the bearer bringing her letters."

"But what is a bearer, Ethel?"

"A bearer? oh, he is just a man-servant."

"But you know, Ethel," said May, "you can't make this doll's house like mamma's bungalow in India. What will you do with the glass in the windows?"

"Have they no glass in their windows in India?" said Johnnie, who was not too old to play with dolls.

“Oh no; they have only venetian blinds where we have glass. But see,” May continued, “here is a bit of brown paper; we can put it up and cover the glass with it, and pretend it is a *tattie*.”

“What is a *tattie*?” said Fanny.

“A *tattie* is a blind made of dried grass; and in the very hot weather mamma had these *tatties* steeped in water, and fastened up to the window, so that when the wind blew through, the air of the room became cool.”

“Now, Johnnie,” continued Ethel, “if you will lend us some of your long bricks, I think we could pin them to the ceiling of this room so as to look like rafters, because very few houses in India, in the country at any rate, have rooms with proper ceilings like ours. The beams of wood stretch across, and are not concealed, as they are in this country; and mamma has often told me that numbers of sparrows used to build in the rafters in her dining-room, and became so tame that they flew down and pecked the crumbs off her breakfast table; and the crows did the same.”

“Crows! I should not have liked crows to be in the room,” said Fanny.

“Oh! they only came in at the window. We might get the birds from Chrissie’s Noah’s ark to



be the sparrows and crows. And, Johnnie, if you will lend us some more of your bricks, we could make the veranda of them; for every Indian house has a veranda all round it. And then we can paint flowers, and fasten them on to the bricks, and pretend they are different kinds of creeping plants."

And so the children played on very happily with their toys. Sometimes Aunt Jane was at home, sometimes in India, and even Johnnie's boat was turned into a P. and O. steamer to carry her backwards and forwards.


The time passed in this way so very quickly that they could scarcely believe nurse when she told them that it was time for tea, and that the carriage was ordered to take the cousins home. Many good-byes were said, and many promises given by them to come again very soon. And when they were gone, Fanny found that she was very tired, and would like to go to bed. Before lying down to sleep, however, she did not forget to pray to her heavenly Father, to thank him for giving her so much happiness, and to pray that he would grant her the aid of his Holy Spirit, so that when her next birthday came round she might be a wiser and a better little girl.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE DONKEY.

"Poor donkey ! I'll give him a handful of grass ;  
I'm sure he's a good-natured, honest old ass.  
'Tis true now and then he has got a bad trick  
Of standing stock still, or just trying to kick ;  
But then, poor old fellow, you know he can't tell  
That standing stock still is not using me well."

JANE TAYLOR.



HAVE been out to see your donkey, Fanny," said Johnnie to her the next morning at breakfast. "It is certainly very pretty, but Sandy says you will never be able to ride it."

"Why not?" said his mother.

"Well, mamma, Sandy says it has not been properly trained. He got on its back this morning, and it almost threw him off."

Poor Fanny began to cry at this sad news.

"Don't cry, Fanny," said her father; "that is very foolish—crying will do no good. I will go out with you after breakfast and see about it."

The donkey can easily be changed, and another procured, if what Johnnie says is true."

Accordingly, after breakfast, her father sent for Sandy the groom, and desired him to bring the donkey to the hall door.

"If you please, sir," said Sandy, "it is in the field beyond the lodge."

"Then instead of your bringing it here, we had better go and look at it. You can bring a bridle with you, and Master Willie will try if he can ride it."

Sandy smiled, but said nothing, and went away for the bridle, whilst the rest walked slowly on.

"I do hope," said Johnnie, "that we shall be able to tame this donkey, it is such a pretty one. It is strange how very few donkeys are pretty, papa."

"In this country," replied his father, "they are generally poor beasts, so ill used and neglected that it is scarcely possible for them to be pretty. But in Asia, where they are better cared for, they are sometimes very handsome, especially the white ones."

"White donkeys, papa! I never knew they were ever white."

"They are very rare, and are generally much

larger and finer than the common gray donkey, and of course very much more valuable, so that it was only the great and noble who could in former times, or even now, possess them. Ask your mother to point out to you, in the Book of Judges, the chapter in which it is said that the nobles rode upon white asses. If I remember aright, Deborah, in her song of triumph over Sisera, speaks of them as doing so. Of course, you remember, my dear Fanny, who it was that is mentioned in the New Testament as riding upon an ass, and upon what occasion ?”

“Oh yes, papa ; you mean when our Lord entered Jerusalem upon an ass’s colt.”

“I do ; and though between his time and the time of the Judges a great change had taken place in the feeling of the people, and from their connection with the Romans the Jews had come to look upon asses with great contempt in comparison with horses, yet we know our Lord entered Jerusalem as its king, and as such accepted the homage of his followers, on that occasion. And though he is described as meek, and sitting upon an ass, yet still I think he wished to remind the people of the time in their history when the Almighty was their real and

acknowledged Ruler, and at which time their chief men rode upon asses. It may be fanciful on my part, but I never can bear to hear the ass spoken slightly of when I remember that it was so honoured by our Lord. The old legend says that it was then that the mark of the cross was impressed upon the back and shoulders of the animal."

"The mark of the cross! What do you mean, papa?"

"Don't you know that a black mark runs down the donkey's back and another right across its shoulders?"

"Oh yes, I have seen it," replied Fanny; "but I thought it was always there."

"Certainly it was," said her father, smiling; "I merely mentioned it to show you what foolish things used to be said in former times."

Thus conversing, they came to the little stream in which Johnnie was in the habit of sailing his boat. Here they found two of James Wilson's children gathering wild flowers, and at any other time Fanny would have begged to be allowed to stay with them, but now she was all impatience to see her donkey.

In a few minutes they were at the field. Pluto



GATHERING WILD FLOWERS.

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had accompanied them, and he rushed into the field whilst the groom was opening the gate.

No sooner did the donkey see the dog than it ran towards him, lifting its lips and showing its teeth, evidently intending to bite. Poor Pluto fled in the most abject terror, with his tail between his legs, from his unexpected assailant. He ran swiftly round and round the field, but the donkey was evidently gaining on him.

"O papa, Pluto will be killed!" cried Fanny, bursting into tears. "Save him! save him!"

Her father could scarcely speak for laughing, but he ordered Sandy to open the gate for the dog, and, if possible, catch his enemy. Pluto darted out, and the donkey attempted to follow him; but the man seized it, and with some difficulty put on the bridle.

"Now, Master Johnnie," said Sandy, "would you like to ride home?"

"No, thank you, Sandy," said Johnnie with a smile; "I had rather let Willie try first."

Willie was about to mount, but his father advised him to wait till he got to the lawn. "There is no use in running the risk of being thrown into the stream," he said; "and the walk to the house will quiet the creature."

They found their mother with little Chrissie waiting for them on the lawn.

"It is a beautiful donkey," she said; "it is one of the prettiest I ever saw. But what is the matter with Pluto? And Fanny looks as if she had been crying."

She was much amused when told of what had taken place, but added,—

"I hope we shall be able to keep it."

"Oh yes, ma'am," said Sandy. "It is a very young beast, and has not been properly trained; but I think we'll be able to make it fit for Miss Fanny."

By this time Willie had got on the donkey's back, and rode round the lawn very triumphantly.

"It is very quiet," he said. "See, I can even read whilst I am riding;" so saying, he took a book out of his pocket and began to read.

The donkey had been apparently waiting for his opportunity, and, feeling that his rider was off his guard, walked slowly in the direction of a large plane tree that stood at the top of a gentle eminence. Then in an instant it galloped rapidly forward, so that poor Willie's head struck against one of the low-hanging branches of the tree, and down he rolled to the foot of the hill.



They all ran to him. "I hope you are not hurt, Willie," said his mother.

"Oh no," he said, laughing; "the ground is soft. But I fear you ought to send away the donkey; and yet it is a pity."

"I think," said his father, "we might try it for a month. I do not wonder that it was restive both with you and Sandy. You are both far too heavy for it, and the poor beast has evidently not been well used. Sandy must try and train it. Johnnie, under his charge, can ride on its back every day, and by the end of a month we shall be able to judge if it is safe to let Fanny mount it."

Every morning Johnnie rode on its back whilst Sandy held the bridle, and after doing so brought it some corn and bread, so that in a little while the donkey seemed to know that its reward came after it had done its duty. By the end of the month it had become the most gentle of donkeys. Even little Fanny lost her terror, and enjoyed her ride as much as Johnnie did, and stroked and fondled it as if it had never been wild.

But poor Pluto never could get over his terror or forget how it had chased him, and always slunk away when he saw them going to his enemy.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### AN ADVENTURE.

“Playing and prancing,  
Dashing and dancing,  
The waves of the sea come on ;  
Falling and foaming,  
Rippling and roaming,  
One minute,—and then they are gone.

“ Whisking and whirling,  
Tossing and twirling,  
They come with a rush and a roar ;  
Splashing and sprawling,  
Creeping and crawling,  
And then back again from the shore.”

*Echoes of our Childhood*



FANNY'S father and mother lived about six miles from the sea-shore, and during the summer months her mother was in the habit of driving there every Wednesday, and leaving the children for an hour or two on the beach, while she spent the afternoon with their Aunt Mary, whose cottage was in the neighbourhood.

The children enjoyed these expeditions exceed-

ingly. Fanny always bathed, and was most courageous in the water. She jumped and danced, and dipped her head over and over again; but poor little Chrissie could not be persuaded to do more than paddle. Her great delight was to dig in the sand with her wooden spade and build sand houses, or else to search for shells to give to her mamma.

But much as Fanny enjoyed going to the sea-side with nurse and the little ones, she enjoyed it still more when her father and brothers went; for then she could scramble about the rocks, and examine the little pools of salt water in which the tiny fish darted backwards and forwards, or watch the beautiful anemones as they put out their long feelers.

One Wednesday morning Willie came into the parlour, where his mother was hearing Johnnie and Fanny their lessons. "Mother," said he, "are you to take nurse and the little ones to the sea to-day? I want particularly to get some more hermit crabs for my aquarium. I know the tide will be out this afternoon, and I am sure I shall be able to get a great many different specimens. My father, too, says he is disengaged to-day and could go with me."

"There is no occasion for nurse and the little

ones to go to-day," replied his mother; "but if your father wishes to go, perhaps he would like to start earlier, so as to have really a long afternoon at the rocks. And in that case Johnnie and Fanny had better come too; they can go with me to your aunt's and get dinner there. Ask your father what he would like me to arrange."

Willie soon came back with the message that his father thought the carriage should be at the door at twelve o'clock, so that he and Willie might have plenty of time, and asked that a few biscuits might be taken for them.

"Mamma," said Johnnie, who had been listening to all these plans, "may I not go with papa and Willie? I am so fond of scrambling about on the rocks, and I may be of some use in getting animals for Willie."

"And I too, mamma," said Fanny; "may I not go too?"

"I am afraid, dear," said her mamma, "they will walk too far for you."

"I don't think so, mamma; and besides, if I feel tired, I can easily sit down on the sands while they scramble about."

"Well," said her mother, "at any rate we can all drive to the beach, and then, if you still

wish for it, perhaps your father will take you with him."

Punctually at twelve o'clock the carriage drove to the door. Johnnie and Fanny were already waiting on the hall steps. Pluto and Don were with them, the former sedately lying basking in the sun, the latter jumping about and trying to persuade Fanny to have a run with him. No sooner had she got into the carriage beside her mother, than with one bound he was on the seat beside her.

"Get out, Don—get out, sir," said Willie, and was just about to lift the dog out.

"Oh no, Willie," said Fanny; "let Don come. He can stay in my lap, and can play with me on the sea-shore. We took him last week, and he was so happy.—Mayn't I take him, mamma?"

Her mother agreed that Don should remain in the carriage; and old Pluto, when he saw his play-fellow carried off, not liking to be left alone, roused himself and trotted beside the carriage.

"The sea, after all, is not very far out, Willie," said Johnnie, when they had reached the shore and the carriage stopped for them to get out.

"But don't you know that it is still going out?" said his brother. "We shall be quite able to get

to that farthest point of rocks out there that you see just above the water."

"They are about a mile off," replied Johnnie ; "and besides they are in the deep sea."

"They are now, but they will be quite bare by the time we get to them ; and that point is nearly two miles from where we are now."

"Well, Fanny," said her mother, "are you quite sure that you would rather go with your papa than come with me to your Aunt Mary's ?"

"Oh yes, mamma ; pray let me go with papa. Here is Don too ; if I am tired, he and I can play on the sands whilst the others scramble about ;" and so saying, she jumped out of the carriage.

"Take care of yourself then," replied her mother. — "And when shall I come back for you all ?" she continued, turning to her husband.

"I think you must give us three hours," he replied. "By that time Willie will surely have found all that he wants."

This being settled, she drove away, and the rest began their walk. Fanny had brought a little basket with her, into which she put all the pretty shells and sea-weed she could find. She was very eager to get them, as she wanted to cover a little wooden box that had once held scented

soap with them, as a birthday present for nurse to hold her tapes and buttons. Willie had promised to line it with pretty red paper upon condition that Fanny did all the outside herself.

By their father's desire the children kept up on the dry sand. "There is no occasion," he said, "to get wet unnecessarily. Keep up on this dry hard sand until we get to that line of rocks that runs straight out far into the sea. We will follow it and search among those rocks; but in the meanwhile let us go straight on."

"O papa," said Fanny, when they had gone about three-quarters of a mile, "what shall I do? I have lost one of my gloves. It is the glove of my right hand. I took it off that I might not dirty it whilst picking up shells, and it is gone."

"Let us go back a little way and search for it," said her father. "We can follow our footprints."

They went back a little way, but in vain; the glove could nowhere be found.

"Come here, Pluto," said Willie; "you ought to be able to help us.—Give me your other glove, Fanny." Fanny gave Willie her glove, and he showed it to the dog and made him smell it, and said, "Now go back, Pluto, and find the other

glove," and as he said this, Willie pointed to the spot from which they had begun their walk.

Pluto looked at his young master as if to be quite sure that he understood what had been said ; then he wagged his tail, turned round, and trotted slowly along at first with his nose close to the ground. Gradually he quickened his pace to a run, but he never lifted his nose from the sand. On he went, on and on, till he came very near the place where they had got out of the carriage. Then he stopped and turned round, and they thought he lifted something from the ground, but the distance was too great for them to see distinctly. As he galloped back, however, they saw that something certainly was in his mouth.

"It is the glove, papa," said Johnnie ; "I am sure it is Fanny's glove."

"I think it is, my dear," replied his father. "But we must not be too certain ; it may be some other glove or bit of cloth he has found."

While he was speaking, Pluto bounded up to him and laid down what he had in his mouth at his feet, and it was Fanny's glove.

"You dear, good Pluto," said Fanny, "how glad I am you have found it !"

"Well done, Pluto," said Willie ; "I did not



think you had so much sense." And they all patted and caressed him; while Pluto wagged his tail, and smiled as only dogs can smile, and looked very happy.

"And now," said their father, "we must lose no time. We are close to the rocks; let us follow them, and try to reach Dog's Head. I have never been there."

Dog's Head was a huge rock that terminated a long ridge of smaller rocks that stretched far out into the sea, and was so called on account of its fancied resemblance to a dog's head.

They all proceeded in the direction their father pointed out, but not very fast.

"O Willie," said Johnnie, "look at this beautiful anemone."

"And oh, Johnnie," exclaimed Fanny, "do watch this huge whelk; look how it runs along!"

"That is not a whelk, Fanny; it is a hermit crab that has crept into a whelk-shell. I wonder why they take away other shells, papa, instead of being content with their own?"

"Because, although most crabs are entirely covered with a strong hard shell, as you know, the tails of these hermit crabs have no shell to cover them. They are left bare and exposed, and, as

they are quite soft, the crab creeps into any shell it can find, in order to protect its tail."

"Tails!" said Johnnie; "but have crabs tails?"

"Indeed they have. We must catch one, and you will find it has a tail tucked up under its shell."

"Look here, father," said Willie, "look at this splendid crass \* I have found. Is it not lucky I was able to knock off the piece of rock it was sticking to with my hammer? I think I shall be able to keep it alive till we get home, if I wrap the crass up in wet sea-weed."

And thus they went on, talking and examining and gazing with ever increasing wonder and delight at the lovely forms and colours they saw on the rocks and in the pools.

"But those jelly-fish," said Fanny, pointing to some that were lying on the sand, "how ugly and disgusting they look!"

"They certainly don't look very pretty there," said her father; "but I hope that, with the aid of Willie's net, we shall be able to procure one, for it is one of the most beautiful of all these beautiful creatures when in its own proper home, the water."

"But how is that, papa? It has no shape; it looks like a lump of dirty muddy water."

\* A species of anemone.

"You are right. It is almost entirely composed of water, and this is the cause of its great beauty; for, in consequence of the light shining through it, the jelly-fish, when moving through the sea, assumes all the colours of the rainbow. There are many different kinds of jelly-fish, or medusæ, as they are called. I once was so fortunate as to get a very lovely one, called a beroë. I can best explain its beauty by saying that it was like a ball of cut or polished crystal. Two long, slender, fringed threads, which looked as if made of spun glass, were thrown out by it when the creature floated through the water, and they waved and shone and sparkled with the most wonderful beauty."\*

The rocks at this point became so slippery that it needed all their care and attention to scramble on amongst them. At last they reached the smooth flat surface of the Dog's Head.

"Let us sit down for a little while," said their father. "You must be tired, Fanny."

"Oh no, papa; only I am very hungry."

"And so am I," said Johnnie.

"Here are some biscuits for you," said their father. "We had better come to this side of the rock; we shall be sheltered from the sun."

\* "Common Objects of the Sea-Shore."

"It is a pity we have to look towards the land, instead of towards the sea," said Fanny; "but see, there is the road that leads to Aunt Mary's cottage, and there, I think, is *mamma* in the carriage."

"Nonsense, Fanny, that is not our carriage; don't you see those horses are white, not brown."

The sun was very strong and hot, and the seat they had chosen was so comfortable that they sat chatting and resting, forgetting how time was passing. Willie alone of the party could not remain still. He was constantly searching about amongst the rocks. Sometimes he had different anemones to show them; then he found a living sea-urchin; but his greatest prize of all was a sea-mouse.

The portion of rock on which his father and the children were sitting was so high up, and the rock itself rose so abruptly out of the water, that they could not see the sea immediately below them; and their attention, also, was taken up by trying to recognize the different features of the landscape which lay spread out before them. Suddenly Willie came up to them with a very scared face.

"Papa," said he, "I think we have made a mistake about the tide. I think we ought to go away

at once ; the tide is coming in very fast. I did not notice it for some time, as I was very busy trying to hammer off some pieces of rock on which sea-weeds were growing, and my back was turned to the sea."

They all started up and hastily proceeded to descend the mass of rock they were on. As they came down they saw that what Willie had said was only too true, and that the Dog's Head was now an island. The water round it was as yet only a foot deep, but the tide was coming in very fast, and the rocks were so slippery, and walking over them was so difficult, that they felt no time was to be lost.

"Willie, you had better help Johnnie, and I will take charge of Fanny." So saying, his father scrambled down the lowest ridge of the Dog's Head on to the sand, and lifted Fanny down in his arms.

They hesitated a little as to whether they should all remain on the sand and wade through the sea. But the waves came on with such a rush that it was settled that Johnnie and Fanny should remain on the rocks, where they would be almost entirely out of the reach of the waves, whilst Willie and his father walked beside them and helped them.

The two little children neither cried nor screamed. They knew they were in great danger, but they had such implicit faith in their father, and were so accustomed to obey him, that without a moment's hesitation they did as he desired. They scrambled along the rocks, and when they slipped or fell, got bravely up again, and never uttered a complaint.

On they went, struggling towards the shore; but the cruel sea came up faster and faster behind them. At first the water was only up to Willie's ankles, but it rose and rose up to his knees, and then up to his waist. It was terrible work wading through the sea. Even if he could have left Johnnie, his clothes were so heavy with water that it would have been impossible for him to swim. He felt very weary and faint, and it seemed to him that the next wave must wash him away. One arm he put round Johnnie, and with the other he clung firmly to the rock, as the wave rushed past him.

"Courage, Willie," said his father, looking back; "the worst is over. We are almost at the margin of the shore; another twenty yards will bring us there."

The poor boy felt as if he could never walk those twenty yards; but he summoned all his resolution,

he struggled bravely on, and at last he and Johnnie and Fanny and his father were standing safe on the dry beach, where a crowd of people, fishermen and others, was assembled, who had watched the strugglers with intense interest, but had been unable to give any help.

And the dogs, where were they? On looking back they saw that Pluto, who was a large powerful dog, was already out of the water, and was standing shaking himself; but poor Don was still some little distance from the shore. They could only see a little black object tossed helplessly to and fro by the waves, as if it were without life.

"Don is drowned! poor little Don!" exclaimed the two younger children, bursting into tears, who, though they had endured their own peril without a murmur or complaint, could not bear to witness the death of their little favourite.

A fisher-lad who was standing by, on seeing the children's distress, offered to wade into the water and bring the little creature out, in case it might be still alive. His offer was eagerly accepted, and in a few minutes he was back again with Don in his arms.

The poor little thing was still alive, but so exhausted that it could not move. Johnnie

eagerly thanked the fisher-boy, and seizing his little favourite in his arms, held it close to him in the hope that his own warmth might revive it.

“And now, Willie,” said his father, “we must hasten to your aunt’s cottage.”

Receiving no reply, he looked round, and saw that poor Willie had fainted.

An old fisherman, who was watching the scene with much interest, without saying a word knelt down on the grass beside him, and moistened his lips with some whisky which he carried in a flask. The stimulating effect of the strong spirit revived Willie, and in a few minutes he was able to sit up.

A respectable-looking woman, whose husband kept a small farm, now came forward and begged that the whole party would accompany her to her house, which stood close by, and rest there until the carriage should arrive to take them home.

As she spoke, however, the carriage appeared, and great was the alarm of the mother on seeing the state her children and husband were in.

“What is all this?” she said; “what has happened? But do not wait to tell me now. Come in quickly, and let us drive home as fast as possible.”

But Mrs. Brown would not hear of this. “No,



no," she said; "you must all come to my house and get some warm food and dry clothes. You will have your poor boy fainting again.—Run, Sandy," she continued, turning to a little boy who stood beside her, "run and chain up Rover, and tell Jeannie to put the kettle on and get tea ready."

They could not resist her hospitality, and were soon comfortably seated round her kitchen fire. While tea was being prepared, Johnnie and Fanny poured warm milk and water down poor Don's throat. The warmth of the fire and the food revived the little creature, and, to their great joy, he opened his eyes and raised himself up on Johnnie's knee. Willie and his father had, in the meanwhile, gladly accepted the farmer's proposal to exchange their wet clothes for some of his own.

They were a very quiet party going home. The parents sat silent, unable to speak, so full were their hearts of gratitude and thankfulness. Willie leaned back in his corner of the carriage, pale and exhausted. Fanny tried to count over her shells, but found she was too wearied to do so, and following Johnnie's example fell asleep, and was only roused by the stopping of the carriage.

As they drove up to the door they were met by nurse, who was coming in from the usual afternoon's walk with the younger children. She was much startled when she saw them, and in answer to her anxious looks her mistress briefly told her what had taken place, and then added, "And now, nurse, you had better get Master Johnnie and Miss Fanny into bed as quickly as you can. Give them both a very hot bath first, and their tea after they are in bed."

"And, my dear Willie," she added, turning to her son, "I think you had better do the same. Take a hot bath, and I will bring you a basin of soup when you are in bed."

"Thank you, mother," he replied; "I shall be very glad to do so, but first I must put my anemones and sea-mouse into my aquarium. I think they are still alive."

"You will not go to Dog's Head again, I should think, Willie," said Johnnie.

"Certainly we will," said his father; "only I fear we must leave you and Fanny at home, and be more careful when we do go to watch the tide. And now," he continued, "before we all retire to rest, come with me to my study and let us offer our thanks to Almighty God for our preservation."

They followed him in silence to his room, where he read the last six verses of the fourth chapter of St. Mark, and offered up a few appropriate expressions of thankfulness, and a petition that the lives thus mercifully saved might be devoted to the service of their Lord and Master.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CORN.

"Till at length a small green feather  
From the earth shot slowly upward,  
Then another, and another ;  
And before the summer ended,  
Stood the maize in all its beauty,  
With its shining robes about it,  
And its long, soft yellow tresses.  
And still later, when the autumn  
Changed the long green leaves to yellow,  
And the soft and juicy kernels  
Grew like wampum hard and yellow,  
Then the ripened ears he gathered,  
Stripped the withered husks from off them,  
And made known unto the people  
This new gift of the Great Spirit."—*Hiawatha*.



SUMMER had passed away, and the fields were yellow with ripe corn.

"Are you going to Mrs. Brown's this afternoon, mother?" said Willie one day at luncheon. "I heard the children talking about it."

"Yes," exclaimed Fanny eagerly. "I have finished the comforter I was knitting for Mrs. Brown, and mamma said she would take me as

soon as I had done it.—Did you not promise that, mamma ?”

“Yes, my dear ; we can drive to her farm this afternoon. And besides, I want to arrange that her little girl should gather blackberries for me.”

“Well,” said Fanny’s father, “if you can drive home by the upper road, Willie and I could meet you, and we could all walk back through the nut wood.”

“If you have leisure, would it not be more pleasant,” replied his wife, “if we were all to drive to the farm together, and come home, as you propose, by the nut wood ? We might miss each other if we were to go in separate parties.”

It was settled in this way ; and after a pleasant drive they arrived at Mrs. Brown’s hospitable cottage. Fanny presented her little gift, which was much admired, and for which she received many thanks.

The children had been there so often since the day of their adventure on the sands, that they knew all the cows well, and there was one calf which Fanny considered her own, and which was called after herself.

“But where is Jessie ?” said Fanny ; “and where is the pet lamb ?”

"They are both in the Den," replied Mrs. Brown. "Jessie has gone to gather brambles, and has taken the lamb with her."

"May we go there, mamma?"

"You must first have some scones, Miss Fanny. Mary has been baking to-day."

The children well knew how very nice Mary Brown's scones were, and the drive in the open air had made them hungry, so they very gladly sat down to a feast of scones and milk; while their mother chatted with Mrs. Brown, and their father and Willie strolled about the stack-yard with her husband.

"Will your little girl have leisure to gather brambles for me, Mrs. Brown?" inquired Fanny's mother. "I want several baskets of them to make jam. I think you have a good many here about."

"Oh yes, ma'am, plenty in the Den; Jessie can easily gather them for you."

"Is the Den far from this?" asked Johnnie.

"Not more than a quarter of a mile; but it is a rough road, Master Johnnie."

"I suppose the carriage could not meet us there," said his mother.

"Oh no, ma'am; but beyond the Den is a corn-field. If you won't find it too much to walk

through it, on the other side is a good road, where the carriage could wait for you."

"Well, children, when you are ready we will go there."

They found that the beauty of the place amply repaid them for the trouble of walking there. A little rivulet murmured through the bottom of it, and the steep banks were covered with luxuriant grass and graceful ferns, and a few autumn flowers, most conspicuous amongst which were the fox-glove and queen of the meadow. And on the summit of the banks various forest trees afforded a pleasant shade from the heat of the sun.

Little Jessie was soon found with her playmate the lamb. She had put down her basket of fruit, and was busy twisting a garland of leaves and flowers round the little creature's neck, when they came up.

She rose quickly, as soon as she perceived them, smiling and blushing, and was much pleased when told by her mother of the order for the brambles.

"You will be able to buy that scarf you wanted now, Jessie, as the lady is so kind to you;" and Mrs. Brown then explained that Jessie had seen a blue silk scarf in a shop window, which she wanted very much to have, to wear at church.



THE PET LAMB.

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"And now, Jessie," said she, "you had better go home, and take March with you, while I show the lady the road."

"Why do you call the lamb March, Mrs. Brown?" said Fanny; "it is such a funny name."

"Because, Miss Fanny, it was born in March. I remember the day well. It was bitter cold. The wind was blowing wildly, and showers of rain and snow were falling. I was very ill with rheumatism at the time, and was sitting wrapped up in a shawl by the kitchen fire, when my husband came in with something under his greatcoat. 'Here, wife,' said he, 'can you do anything for this poor little beast? I found the mother dead this morning, and I fear the little thing will die too, for it is only a few days old.' I took it in my arms, but when I saw how feeble it was, I shook my head, and said I feared we could not save it. But Jessie there begged that it might be her lamb; and she got a bottle, to which she tied a bit of rag, and filled it with milk, and fed the lamb like a baby, and the creature lived and thrived under her care. So the lamb is now hers, and her father says it is always to be hers, and that he will never sell it."

By this time they had reached the corn-field,

where Mrs. Brown bade them good-bye, after giving directions to her daughter Mary, who was superintending the reapers, to take them across the field.

As they walked on Fanny amused herself by gathering a nosegay of blue cornflowers and scarlet poppies.

"I wish I could get some of these poppies by the roots," said she, "and plant them in my garden, they are so pretty."

"They are annuals, my dear," said her mother, smiling, "which means, I think you know, that the roots only live one year."

"Mary Brown was saying just now," added Johnnie, "that she wished they could get rid of these poppies that you are so fond of, Fanny. Useless things she called them."

"And yet," said his father, "they are far from useless. One kind of poppy supplies us with what has done more to alleviate suffering than almost anything else."

"What is that, papa?"

"Bring me a poppy, and I will show you."

Johnnie brought him one, and his father, breaking the stalk in two, showed him that a white milky juice flowed out.

"I have seen that in dandelions too, papa."

"You have; and if James Wilson gives you a lettuce-leaf, you will see that it too has this same juice. Many plants have it. This juice is what is called a narcotic. Do you know what that means, Johnnie?"

"I think it means that it takes away pain, papa."

"Well, it does take away pain. Its proper meaning, however, is that it produces sleep. Now, if you look at this withered poppy-head, you will see, when I open it, what countless numbers of seeds there are. From these, when ripe, a very useful oil is made, but which, however, is not in the least a narcotic; it has no effect in producing sleep. But do you see this little case that contains the seeds? It is called a capsule. If you prick this capsule before it becomes quite ripe and hard, as it is now, a thick fluid would exude. It is from this fluid that opium is made, and from opium, again, laudanum is made."

"Laudanum! oh, I know it; mamma put some into my ear one night when I had earache, and I almost immediately went to sleep. I did not know before that we got it from the common poppy," said Johnnie.

"We do not get it from the common poppy.



IN THE CORN-FIELD.

The poppy from which it is produced is white, and is only occasionally found in this country. It is chiefly cultivated in India, where immense quantities of opium are made."

During this talk their mother had taken a seat upon a bundle of sheaves that had been flung down upon the ground, and was gazing at the tranquil, busy scene before her.

"Does not this put you in mind of Joseph's field, mamma," said Fanny, "when all his brethren's sheaves bowed down before his?"

"Yes, my darling."

"But, Fanny," said Johnnie, "that was only in a dream."

"True," replied his father; "but Joseph in his dream must have beheld a scene something like this."

"But was the corn that grew in the land of Canaan the same as the corn we have now?"

"Certainly it was—or rather it was like our bearded wheat. Can you tell me what kind of corn is in this field?"

"It is wheat, I think, papa."

"Yes, it is wheat; and it was wheat with which Joseph fed his brethren when they came into Egypt at the time of the famine. We are enabled to

know what it was like, as some ears of it were discovered in some of the mummies that have been dug up. The grains were redder than our wheat; and the experiment was tried of sowing a few. But it failed, no corn sprang from them, they produced nothing; and no wonder, as two thousand years must have elapsed since they were gathered. Can you tell me the names of any other kinds of corn, Fanny?"

"Oats, papa, and barley."

"Yes. Any more?"

"Rye," said Johnnie.

"Yes; and do you know to what tribe of plants corn of all kinds belongs?"

"They are, I think, grasses, papa," said Johnnie hesitatingly.

"You are quite right; and of all the gifts of the Almighty, the grasses in their various forms are the most useful. Without them, indeed, the world could not exist. The lowly grass at our feet not only affords food for the cattle of the farmer, but serves to bind together the soil which nourishes the forest trees. The tough creeping roots of the grass hold the earth together so firmly that the most violent storms can rarely uproot it or scatter the soil which it covers. But can you not tell

me the names of any other of the grass tribe,—kinds that don't grow in this country?"

"There is the American corn, papa," said Johnnie.

"Yes; and have you forgotten rice and the sugar-cane?"

"But are they grasses?"

"Most certainly they are; and so is the bamboo."

"And does our corn grow in these countries?" said Johnnie.

"There are large fields of wheat in India. And have you forgotten that we were just now speaking of it as being in Egypt? It is not known where it originally came from, for it has never been found in a wild state. And it is a very remarkable fact that, whilst common grasses spread and grow and multiply in spite of all that is done to destroy them, the corn, which is used as food by man, does not flourish unless it is sown by man, or rather, I should say, unless man prepares the ground for it. If no care were taken of it, it would speedily become extinct. The old Greeks and Romans were so aware of this fact, and looked upon it as such a direct gift from heaven, that their priests declared that the goddess Ceres not

only gave the grain to Triptolemus, but also showed him how to cultivate it; and in like manner the North American Indians believed that the Great Spirit had himself shown to their ancestors how to cultivate it. And as God sent the manna daily to the Israelites in the wilderness, that they might daily exert themselves, so he has ordained that year by year man must prepare the earth for the corn he is to sow, if he would avert famine; for you know, Johnnie, that corn is an annual, and must be sown every year. Man must exert his own skill and industry to procure food for himself; and yet, with all his skill and industry, he cannot procure it unless God sends seed-time and harvest.

“Harvests fail, one year in one part of the world, and another year in another part of the world; but were they to fail all over the world in one single year, universal famine would take place,—not all our flocks and herds could save us. Let us never forget that we receive our daily bread from him.

“And not only must man exercise his skill and industry in cultivating those grasses that supply him with food, but he must also exert them in fitting them for food for himself, for he must *cook*



them. Grass, if eaten by man uncooked, produces disease and death. It cannot be eaten by him as by animals, without care and trouble. The soldiers of Napoleon I., on their retreat from Moscow, devoured raw grass to appease their hunger, and died in great agony in consequence. This is another of the many proofs that God has given us that he intends man to employ and improve the faculties bestowed on him."

"Are you going to walk home through the nut wood, mamma?" said Fanny after they had been for some time in the carriage.

"I intend to drive home, my dear," replied her mother, "as I am rather tired, but the rest of you can walk if you like."

So at the turn of the road Fanny and her brothers got out of the carriage and entered the nut wood. This was a small plantation of trees about half a mile from their home, which the children called the nut wood, as it abounded in hazel bushes, and every autumn they went there to gather nuts for Hallowe'en.

There they found nurse and the younger children, and little Don with them. Nurse had brought a basket with her, and was very busy gathering nuts, in which occupation the children eagerly joined her.



NUTTING.

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"How very hot it is!" said Willie; "I wish I had not brought my overcoat out of the carriage. Here, Don," said he, taking it off and throwing it on the ground, "lie there till I come back for it." The little creature frisked about and licked Willie's hand, and then lay down on the coat.

The children went on deeper and deeper into the wood searching for nuts.

"Here, Willie," said Johnnie, "here is a splendid bush."

"And look here, Johnnie," exclaimed Fanny, "look at this one."

The basket nurse had brought was nearly full. "And now," said she, "it is six o'clock, we must all go home. Your mamma will wonder what has become of us."

"Where can Don be?" said Johnnie the next day at luncheon. "I have not seen him all this morning. Have you, Willie?"

"No, I have not," replied his brother. And then he added, suddenly remembering, "Poor little Don! I wonder if he can possibly be in the nut wood with my coat. I told him to lie on it till I came back, and I forgot all about it and him. We must go and look for him."

And accordingly, as soon as luncheon was over,



THE LITTLE GIRL ON THE STILE.

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Fanny and her brothers set off in search of their little favourite. "We shall get to the wood more quickly if we go by stream and across the stile, instead of by the highroad. You can easily get across the stepping-stones if I help you, can't you, Fanny?" said Willie.

"But what shall we do about the field of corn between the stream and the wood?" said Johnnie. "I know it is not yet cut down."

"We must keep to one side, close by the edge; we shall then do no harm," replied Willie.

"As for the stream, I can easily cross it by myself," said Fanny, laughing; and she ran on before her brothers, and had stepped from stone to stone, and was across the stream, and on to the other side before they came up.

On the stile a little girl was sitting holding a large umbrella, to shelter her from the sun, with a dog beside her.

She rose from her seat as they came up, so as to make room for them to pass. Willie asked her if she had come through the nut wood. She said she had.

"And did you see a little black and white dog there?" asked Fanny eagerly.

"Yes, miss, I did; it was lying on a coat."

"That is Don, poor little Don. Let us be quick, Willie."

"Well, give me your hand, Fanny, and jump down."

The field was soon passed, and they entered the wood. "This is the way, Johnnie," said Willie: "don't you see where we trampled down the grass with our feet yesterday?"

They followed the track Willie pointed out, and in a few minutes reached the place where Willie had thrown down his coat. There it was, just as he had left it; and on it the faithful little dog was lying. The poor creature jumped up when he saw them, and wagged his tail.

"Poor little Don,—you good little Don! Let me carry you home," said Fanny, taking him up in her arms.

"Don would much rather run along himself, Fanny," said Willie, laughing. "But we will go home as quickly as we can and give him some food. Poor little fellow! he must be terribly hungry."

But neither Fanny nor Johnnie could be persuaded that Don would prefer to walk. Between them they carried him home, and took him to the kitchen; and there they stood and watched him whilst he ate his dinner.

“And now, you dear Don,” said Fanny, “come with me and get a good swing; you deserve it for being such an obedient little dog.”

He apparently understood her, for he scampered along by her side; and no sooner had she seated herself with her doll on the swing, than he jumped up on to the seat beside her, and seemed to enjoy flying through the air as much as she did.




GIVING DON A SWING.



## CHAPTER X.

### WINTER.

"Pretty robin readbreast,  
Hopping in the snow,  
Why you are so early here,  
I should like to know?"

UMP up, Chrissie, jump up," said Fanny, running into the nursery out of her own little room, which was next to it. "Don't you know this is Christmas day? And look at the snow too; see how it is falling. And see, too, here is your stocking, full of presents. Don't you want to know what they are?"

Chrissie rubbed her sleepy little eyes; but the sight of the snow so delighted her that she jumped out of her bed, and skipped and danced about the nursery floor till nurse carried her off to dress her; and not until she was dressed was she allowed to look at the contents of her stocking, which hung at the foot of the bed. In it were a humming-top from Willie, a little box from

Johnnie, a doll from Fanny, and biscuit animals from the two nurses.

The snow had fallen heavily during the night and early morning, but the day cleared up a little so as to allow them to go to church.

"I do hope our cousins will be able to come this evening, mamma," said Fanny sadly, as she looked out of the window in the afternoon. "Do look how the snow is coming down."

"Nonsense, Fanny," said Johnnie: "of course they will come; they have only two miles to drive."

And Johnnie was right. In a little while Uncle Sam and Aunt Jane, and the girls and their governess, all arrived safely.

After all the greetings were over, every one went to the schoolroom, where mamma distributed the presents. There was a large doll for Chrissie, and a case containing knife and scissors and thimble for Fanny, a scent-bottle for Ethel, and something for every one. Nurse got a desk, and Eliza and Anne each got a work-box. Every one was pleased.

By the time the presents had all been distributed and admired the dinner-hour had come; for on Christmas day all the children dined with their parents, and therefore it was earlier than usual.

And when dinner was over, the room was darkened, and a large dish full of raisins for snap-dragon was brought in. Over this there was great fun; and then they had a game of blind-man's buff, and another of forfeits, till they were quite tired out and glad to sit down to tea.

"Be sure you come and see us next week, Ethel," said Fanny, as her cousin was bidding her good-bye.

"Indeed I will," replied Ethel. "I shall have plenty of time, for we are to have holidays for a fortnight, and I can easily walk over."

But there was no coming for Ethel that week or the week after. The snow went on falling, falling, so that no one went out who could help it. The sky had a very leaden look, as if the sun never would shine again. The poor sheep looked very black and dirty. Only the trees were lovely in their glittering white covering. Twice every day Fanny collected the crumbs, to feed the poor little birds which crowded to the windows.

"What do you think came into the nursery to-day, mamma?" said Chrissie.

"What was it, dear?" replied her mamma.

"A robin, mamma, a lovely little robin; and it ate the crumbs on the floor."



THE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

Fanny and Johnnie ran off to see if what Chrissie had said was true; and there in the nursery they found the robin. The poor little thing seemed to enjoy the warmth of the place, and hopped about as if quite at home. Next morning, to the great delight of the children, when baby was sitting in his bath, it flew down, and perched on the edge of it, and watched baby, who laughed and crowed with joy.

As long as the storm continued, the robin stayed with them, and flew away only when the snow melted. But it lasted a long time, and the children grew very weary of it.

Fanny and Johnnie went out every day, and tried to make snow men; they also tried who could throw snow-balls the farthest: but they got very tired after the first few days.

"I do wish the snow would go, mamma," said Fanny; "I wish it were summer."

"I do not like winter any more than you do, my dear, but it is foolish to think about it. Get your work, and Johnnie shall read us a story. Never allow yourself to grumble about the weather, but think rather of your many comforts, and of the many, many poor who are without them."

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BROKEN LEG.

“When the last rook  
Beat its straight path along the dusky air  
Homewards, I blest it!”

COLERIDGE.



ONE fine morning towards the end of March, when the lessons were over, Johnnie said to his mother,—

“Mamma, instead of going out with you in the carriage this afternoon, may I work in my garden? James Wilson has promised to give me some seeds to put into it.”

“Certainly,” replied his mother. And then turning to Fanny, she said,—

“Would you like to come with me, Fanny, or to walk with nurse?”

“Oh, go with you, mamma; pray let me go with you,” replied the little girl.

So after the children’s dinner was over, Fanny stood at the hall door waiting for her mother; and

Johnnie stood beside her, for the gardener was at his dinner, and he found he could do nothing without James Wilson's help.

At last the carriage drove up, and his mother and Fanny got in. Johnnie jumped up on the step of the carriage, and stood there talking to them. They drove down the avenue and a little way past the lodge gate where the gardener lived, and then, though the carriage was driving fast, Johnnie said, "Good-bye, mamma," and jumped backwards into the road.

Immediately Fanny and her mother felt the carriage give a *bump*, as if it had gone over something. There was a faint cry, and the carriage stopped.

They looked out of the window towards the lodge gate, and saw Johnnie lying on the ground. They saw, too, that he tried to get up, but in vain.

His mother was so frightened, that, though generally she could open the carriage door quite easily, now she trembled so that she could scarcely do it.

At last she succeeded, and ran up to her little boy. He was very pale, and was holding his left leg in both his hands.



WAITING FOR MOTHER.



"Mamma," said he, "the back wheel of the carriage went over my leg."

His mother tried to lift him, but she could not.

"Run, Fanny," said she, "and tell James Wilson to come here quickly."

Fortunately James was in his house, and came at once and took the poor little boy up in his arms, whilst his mother walked beside him and held up the wounded leg.

Fanny ran on as fast as she could to the house, to tell nurse not to go out; and the coachman drove off quickly for the doctor.

James Wilson carried Johnnie to his mamma's room and laid him on the bed; and then nurse came and unlaced his boot and pulled it off, whilst his mother held the foot tightly in her hand. As to the stocking, it had to be cut all the way down. His mother sat beside him, and tried to help him to bear the pain.

At last the doctor arrived, bringing in his hand some long flat slips of wood.

"What are those pieces of wood for, doctor?" said Johnnie.

"These pieces of wood are called splints, my dear little fellow," replied the doctor; "and you

will soon see why I have brought them. Now let me examine your leg."

The doctor felt his leg all over, and then said, "Your leg has been broken by the carriage wheel, and you should be very thankful that you were not killed. And now you will see why I have brought these splints." He then very carefully placed them along the leg, and bandaged them very firmly on with long strips of cotton.

It was very painful, and poor little Johnnie's lips quivered; but he held tight hold of his mamma's hand and said nothing.

"You are a brave little fellow," said the doctor. "And now I will carry you to your own room and to your own bed, and there you must remain for six weeks; and remember, you must not move your leg all that time."

So Johnnie was taken to his own room, and to his own bed. And the doctor brought out of his carriage and put over the leg what looked at first like a dish-cover, or rather like several croquet-hoops joined together by wire. And this kept the leg firm in one place, and prevented the bed-clothes from touching it.

Johnnie's was a nice firm little bed, and every morning his mother had it wheeled to the window.

He was very fond of looking out of that window. Close beside it stood a very large lime tree, which in summer was covered with blossom. Myriads of bees used then to come for the honey; and the sweet scent of the blossom, and the buzz of the insects were a great source of delight to him. Poor little Johnnie! there was no blossom and there were no bees at that season. But beyond stood five large beech trees, and in them a great number of rooks were busy with their eggs. They had built their nests, and a few days after Johnnie had met with his accident he was allowed to be propped up in bed, so that he could watch the rooks; and when the eggs were hatched, he could see the old birds feeding their young ones. And he watched how the colours changed from brown to green in the large moor which stretched away behind the beech trees, far, far away, as far as Johnnie could see.

Poor little boy! He was very fond of running about on that moor with his two dogs, Pluto and Don, but now he could only look at it.

His two dogs, however, came to see him every day; and indeed little Don generally slept with him.

His brother Willie was at school. Johnnie

missed him very much; but his mamma and Fanny tried as much as possible to prevent him from feeling dreary and dull.

They came to his room every morning, and there Fanny said her lessons; and in the afternoon his mother read and talked to him: so the time passed away.

One morning Fanny and little Chrissie ran into his room when his mother was sitting beside him.

"Look, mamma," said Fanny, "what we have brought for Johnnie. Here is a poor little rook; I found it on the ground: and here is a primrose; I found it in the field near the dairy."

Her mother took the rook in her hand, and found that, though still alive, the poor bird was sadly bruised, and she feared one of its wings was broken.

"Poor little thing!" she said; "it must have been blown out of its nest by the storm last night. But I will try to feed it, and perhaps it may live. Ask nurse to bring me a little bread and water, Fanny; and do you, dear, fetch me a flower-pot with some earth in it. I see the primrose has good roots; it too may live, and Johnnie would like to have it by his bedside."

So the bread and water were brought, and his mamma showed Johnnie how to feed the rook; and she gave him a little basket with some hay in it, in which he could keep the wounded bird.

Next morning, however, the poor little rook was found dead in the basket.

The children were very sorry for it; and when they looked at the primrose, they saw that it too hung down its pretty yellow head, as if it could not revive.

"I hope the primrose will live, mamma," said Fanny.

"I think it will," said her mother; "it has good roots. We shall give it plenty of water, and I think in a few hours it will have recovered."

"Now, Chrissie," said her mamma, "we have been talking about the rook being dead, and wishing that it had lived; and now we are hoping that the primrose will live, and we talk of trees being alive: can you tell me what is the difference between a tree being alive, or a primrose, and a bird being alive?"

Little Chrissie, who was only five years old, said,—

"I don't know."

"Tell me, dear, what a bird can do."

"It can fly," said Chrissie.

"Very well. Can a tree fly?"

"No."

"Fanny can tell you," said her mother, "what is the difference between birds and other animals, and trees and flowers. We say that they are all alive."

"Mamma," said Johnnie, "all birds and beasts and fishes can move about as they like; but trees and flowers can't,—they must remain where they are fixed in the ground. And then, birds and beasts and fishes can eat and take food; but plants don't."

"Well, Johnnie, you are right so far, that birds and beasts and fishes can move about, and plants cannot. But I think you might have remembered that some animals in the sea cannot move. Oysters, I believe, cannot move at all; and the beautiful anemones, Willie is so fond of, certainly can detach themselves from a piece of rock, but then they are tossed about by the waves till they are flung on to another rock. But still, so far you are right when you say to Chrissie that though both trees and animals are alive they are not the same, because animals can move about and plants cannot.

"But how can you say that plants don't require food? Why have I put this primrose into this earth and given it so much water, but that it may suck up food from the earth and water?"

"And now, can you tell me the names of certain kinds of food that both plants and animals require equally, though animals have teeth, and birds have beaks, and plants have only roots?"

The children looked one at another, but could not answer.

"Suppose," said their mother, "I were to put your canary, Fanny, with plenty of seed and water into my large box, and I were also to put this primrose there with plenty of water; and suppose I locked them both up for a fortnight: what would happen?"

"They would both die," said Johnnie.

"Why?" said his mother, "why should they die? I will give the canary plenty of seed and water, and the primrose water too."

"But, mamma, they will have no air."

"Exactly so," said his mother. "Now you have told me the name of one kind of food that all plants and animals and every living thing requires. We all need air; and we also all need light and

warmth. And you know what it is that supplies us with light and warmth, Johnnie?"

"The sun, mamma."

"You are right; it is the sun. But the heat of the sun, though it is so far away from us, is so great that this earth would be shrivelled and burned up if it were not protected by the air. The air comes between us and the sun, and shelters us from its too great heat. So you may perceive how valuable and necessary the air is to us. We cannot live without it. It is always around us, by night and by day. We cannot see it, but we can feel it and hear it."

"Feel it, mamma! I never felt it, and I never heard it."

"Indeed, Fanny! what blew your hat off this morning? and what is that which is roaring amongst the beech trees just now?"

"That is the wind, mamma."

"Yes; and we call air wind when we feel it and hear it. But though we can feel it, we cannot touch it, nor can we see it. What do we call anything we cannot see?"

"Invisible, mamma."

"Quite right. Now, can you think of anything else that is invisible, and which we constantly use?"



"Use!" said Johnnie; "how can we use what is invisible?"

Here his mother looked up to the ceiling, and he exclaimed,—

"I know what you mean, mamma; you mean gas."

"But we can see gas when we light it."

"You see the flame, dear Fanny. Gas becomes flame when you apply a light to it, and it then in consequence becomes visible; but it would still be there though no light were applied, and it is then, as you know, invisible. The gas we use in houses is made from coal; but there are several other kinds of gas which are found in caves and mines. They are poisonous, and would soon kill us if we were to breathe them.

"You have heard your father speak of the terrible accidents in coal-pits, when sometimes hundreds of men are killed. One occurred in a colliery in Staffordshire a few years ago. First a report like thunder was heard under ground, then flames rushed up the shaft, and the cottages all about were covered with soot, whilst pieces of coal and blackened timber were hurled up out of the pit. This mischief happened because the gas that was in the pit took fire. You know our coal lies

deep down in the earth in layers or seams, as they are called; and above the coal are generally layers of clay or different kinds of rock. Great wells, or shafts, are dug deep down through them to where the seams of coal lie. The miners are let down these shafts in large baskets by ropes. They dig out the coal with pickaxes, and soon make long passages through the seams, leaving a roof of coal over their head, and every here and there a pillar or column of coal to support this roof. Amongst the coal are springs of water, which must be kept pumped out, or the men would be drowned. The men, too, want air to breathe, and therefore the pit must be so made as to let currents of air rush down one shaft and up another, sweeping along the galleries where they work, or they would be stifled. They want light, for they are in utter darkness, and for this reason must carry candles or lamps with them, which they usually fix on their hats. This it is which causes their great danger. Unless there is enough air kept rushing through the galleries in the seams of coal to blow away the gas, or so mix up with it as to prevent it from lighting, the gas which comes oozing out of the coal collects, and when a lighted candle touches it, takes light. Then think what a flame it makes; how

it spreads ; how the fire becomes so fierce that the gas explodes, like gunpowder, with a frightful noise, blowing up the coal roofs, wounding, burning, and killing the poor miners, and leaving behind it a stifling, choking vapour that destroys whoever breathes it !

“ George Stephenson, who invented the railway, began life as a poor collier. He knew how dangerous it was for the men to take a light into these pits, and therefore set to work to invent a lamp through which enough light would shine for the men to see, without setting fire to the gas, and at last succeeded. He made it of wire gauze, which entirely enclosed the candle, but did not let out enough heat to set the gas alight. Having made his lamp, Stephenson resolved to prove it. On a Sunday, therefore, when there were no workmen in the mine, he went down, lamp in hand. Two of his friends went down with him, begging him to give up the attempt, and not risk his life. But as he continued firm in his resolution, they remained near the shaft, where they could escape when they heard the terrible explosion they expected ; and Stephenson went on alone with lighted lamp to the dangerous part, and held it up in the midst of the gas. All happened as he had ex-

pected. The gas that got inside the lamp and touched the lighted candle flamed up, but the heat that got through the wire gauze did not set fire to the gas outside.

“You see, therefore, how powerful all kinds of air are. The good air does us nothing but good—we need it every moment of our lives; whilst the bad, foul air, again, destroys us. And yet we cannot see either of them. Now tell me what lesson we should learn from this.”

Johnnie shook his head, and answered, “I cannot tell.”

“Well, my darling, it is this, that we must remember—I hope you will remember all your lives long—that the things that are invisible are really the most real, the most powerful things; they are more powerful than the things we see around us.”

THE END.

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